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Women's reservation, delimitation bills defeated in Lok Sabha

Bills fail to secure majority, exposing deep divisions over electoral reforms

NEW DELHI

The women's reservation and delimitation bills failed to secure the required two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha during a special Parliament session, marking a major setback for the Centre's legislative push.

Out of the members present and voting, 278 MPs supported the bills while 211 voted against them. However, the proposals required at least 360 votes to pass, as they involved a constitutional amendment.

The bills aimed to amend provisions related to women's reservation in legislatures and initiate a fresh delimitation exercise. The Opposition strongly opposed the move, calling it an attempt to alter the electoral balance and undermine the federal structure.

During the debate, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi criticised the government, terming the move a "panic reaction." Prime Minister Narendra Modi, however, defended the proposals, asserting that no state would face discrimination in the delimitation process.

Despite the ruling NDA's numerical advantage, it fell short of the supermajority needed for constitutional amendments. The outcome reflects the continued political divide over electoral reforms. The defeat of the bills signals that any future attempt to bring such sweeping changes will require broader political consensus.

VOTING SNAPSHOT

Votes in favour:	278
Votes against	211
Required majority:	360
NDA strength	293 MPs (54%)
Opposition strength:	233 MPs

Congress stalling women's reservation, says Amit Shah

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday accused the Congress of repeatedly delaying the implementation of women's reservation in legislative bodies, claiming it was the fifth such instance of obstruction. He strongly defended the need for delimitation, arguing that the principle of "one person, one vote, one value" has been undermined due to India's population growth from 54 crore in 1971 to nearly 140 crore in 2026. Shah also rejected Opposition claims of a North-South divide, alleging that such narratives were being deliberately fabricated for political reasons. He maintained that delimitation is essential to ensure fair representation and uphold democratic balance across regions.

Strait of Hormuz completely open during ceasefire: Iran

TEHRAN

Iran has declared the Strait of Hormuz "completely open" for commercial vessels during the ongoing ceasefire, easing global concerns over maritime trade and oil supply disruptions.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said the passage will remain open for all vessels along coordinated routes designated by the Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran.

The announcement comes alongside a temporary ceasefire linked to regional tensions involving Israel and Lebanon. US President Donald Trump also confirmed the reopening, though he indicated that a US naval presence would continue until broader agreements with Iran are finalised.

- **Status:** Fully open during ceasefire
- **Navigation:** Coordinated shipping routes
- **Impact:** Oil, global trade stability
- **Trigger:** Israel–Lebanon ceasefire
- **Market reaction:** Oil prices fall 10%

"Passage for all commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz is declared completely open for the remaining period of ceasefire."
—Abbas Araqchi, Iran's Foreign Minister

Iran opens Strait of Hormuz during ceasefire, easing global trade concerns

The Strait of Hormuz, a vital corridor for a significant portion of global oil shipments, plays a critical role in international energy security. Following the announcement, crude oil prices reportedly dropped by around 10 percent, reflecting market relief.

Meanwhile, leaders including Emmanuel Macron and Keir Starmer welcomed the move but emphasised the need for a lasting and secure reopening, with plans underway for international coordination on maritime safety.

Special court verdict triggers disqualification, reshaping Dharwad politics and Congress prospects

Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni gets life term in Yogesh Gowda murder case

BENGALURU

Congress MLA Vinay Kulkarni has been sentenced to life imprisonment by a special court in Bengaluru in connection with the 2016 murder of BJP leader Yogesh Gowda, triggering his immediate disqualification from the Assembly. The Special Court for Elected Representatives, presided over by Judge Santosh Gajanan Bhat, delivered the verdict after a prolonged probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation. Sixteen others were also convicted and handed similar sentences along with fines.

Under Section 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, any legislator sentenced to two years or more faces instant disqualification. The ruling aligns with the landmark Lily Thomas vs Union of India judgment, which removed the earlier grace period for appeals. Kulkarni's Dharwad Rural Assembly seat is now deemed vacant, with the Assembly Secretariat expected to issue a formal notification shortly. A by-election is likely within six months.

The conviction also bars Kulkarni from contesting elections during his imprisonment and for six years after release.

BWSSB becomes India's first water board with ISO 50001:2018 certification

BENGALURU

The Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board on Friday said it has achieved a historic milestone by becoming "the first water utility" in India to receive the internationally recognised ISO 50001:2018 certification.

"This certification is a monumental achievement that strengthens our vision of a climate-resilient and future-ready Bengaluru."
—DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

The certification, issued on April 14, 2026 by Bureau Veritas, recognises BWSSB's robust energy management systems, particularly at its bulk water supply pumping stations in TK Halli, Harohalli and Tataguni.

Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar said the achievement reflects the government's commitment to building sustainable and efficient infrastructure. BWSSB Chairman Ram Prasath Manohar V highlighted the board's ongoing efforts to upgrade infrastructure and adopt advanced technologies to meet global standards. He reiterated the commitment to providing safe and reliable drinking water to citizens.

Officials noted that the recognition not only sets a national benchmark in energy management but also enhances service reliability for millions of residents.

The milestone follows BWSSB's 2025 BIS certification for piped drinking water supply, further cementing its leadership in the urban water sector.

Allahabad HC orders probe into Rahul Gandhi dual citizenship plea

LUCKNOW

The Allahabad High Court has directed authorities to initiate an inquiry into allegations of dual citizenship against Rahul Gandhi, observing that the claims warrant further examination.

The Lucknow Bench issued the order while hearing a petition filed by S. Vignesh Shishir, a BJP worker, who challenged a January 28 ruling of a special MP/MLA court that had refused to order registration of an FIR in the matter. The lower court had held that it lacked jurisdiction to decide issues related to citizenship.

Setting aside that view, the High Court directed the Uttar Pradesh government to either conduct the probe itself or refer the matter to an appropriate central agency for investigation.

The petitioner has sought a detailed probe under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Official Secrets Act, the Foreigners Act and the Passport Act. He has alleged that he possesses documents and email communications purportedly from the British government suggesting that Rahul Gandhi holds British citizenship, which would make him ineligible to contest elections or hold public office in India.

No trekking without guide: Karnataka unveils new SOP

BENGALURU

Karnataka has made it mandatory for trekkers to be accompanied by certified nature guides on all forest department-approved trails, with Forest Minister Eshwar B. Khandre unveiling a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Friday.

The move comes after recent safety incidents, including a trekker going missing in Tadiandamol and another case near Manikyadhara. The SOP aims to strengthen safety, monitoring and accountability.

Authorities said guides must ensure no trekker moves ahead or lags behind, with headcounts conducted regularly.

Communication with base camps every 30 minutes has also been made mandatory.

Trekkers will be briefed on route details, terrain and wildlife response protocols before starting. The SOP prohibits loud devices, weapons, campfires, flash photography and single-use plastics. Waste must be carried back and disposed of at base camps.

Minors must carry parental consent, while senior citizens need fitness certificates. First-aid kits will be mandatory for guides and trekkers.

"All trekking routes will be integrated into an online platform for advance booking, ensuring better regulation and safety," Khandre said.

QUICK READ

Nearly 900 Rohingya dead, missing: UN

GENEVA

Nearly 900 Rohingya refugees were reported dead or missing in 2025 while attempting perilous sea crossings in the Andaman Sea and Bay of Bengal, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said. Spokesperson Babar Baloch termed it the deadliest year on record, with one in seven attempting the journey reported lost. Most refugees depart from camps in Cox's Bazar after fleeing conflict in Myanmar's Rakhine state.

Four Maoists killed in Jharkhand

RANCHI

Four Maoists, including a woman cadre, were killed in an encounter with security forces along the Chatra–Hazaribagh border, police said. Among those killed were Shahdeo Mahto, who carried a J15 lakh bounty, and a woman cadre identified as Natasha. Chatra SP Sumit Kumar Agarwal confirmed the operation, adding that identification is underway. Acting on intelligence inputs, a joint team of Chatra Police and CoBRA commandos launched the operation.

FATAL CAR INFERNO

Six killed in fiery road accident near Shorapur

YADGIR

Six persons, including three women from a single family, were burnt alive after a car collided with a bus and caught fire near Shantapur village in Shorapur taluk of Yadgir district on Friday.

Police said the victims were among nine passengers travelling in the car when it was involved in a head-on collision on National Highway-151. The deceased include Krishna Nayak (52), his wife Anantha Kala (45), Sharanappa (36), his wife Nisarga (30), their three-year-old son Siddhartha, and Shashikala (30), all residents of Sirwar in Raichur district.

Two children — Advika (5) and Srinidhi (18 months) — sustained severe burn injuries and were initially admitted to Yadgir Institute of Medical Sciences before being referred to Kalaburagi for advanced treatment. Their condition is reported to be critical.

The bus, which was travelling from Bengaluru to Kalaburagi, was completely gutted in the fire. However, all 20 passengers on board escaped unhurt.

Preliminary investigations suggest that a tyre burst may have caused the driver to lose control, leading to the collision. The victims were reportedly returning to Sirwar after visiting the Sri Venugopal Swamy temple in Shorapur.

Senior police officials, including Superintendent of Police Prutwik Shankar, visited the spot. Fire and emergency personnel brought the blaze under control after several hours. A case has been registered at Shorapur police station, and further investigation is underway.

QUICK READ

Government Extends DG-IGP Saleem's Tenure till August 2027

BENGALURU
The state government has extended the tenure of Director-General and Inspector-General of Police M A Saleem till August 29, 2027. A 1993-batch IPS officer, Saleem was due to retire by the end of May this year. The extension follows Supreme Court of India guidelines mandating a minimum two-year tenure for state police chiefs. Known for his work in traffic management, Saleem took charge as DG-IGP on May 21, 2025, succeeding Alok Mohan. His appointment was formally regularised in August 2025.

IOC Ups Auto LPG Supply by 300 Percent

BENGALURU
Amid an ongoing LPG crisis affecting auto drivers, Indian Oil Corporation has increased auto LPG supply in the city by nearly 300 percent. On Wednesday, the company supplied 75.5 metric tonnes, compared to the usual 23 MT before the crisis. Across Karnataka, supplies have doubled to over 83 MT, up from the earlier average of 43.5 MT per day. The surge in demand is attributed to disruptions at private Auto LPG Dispensing Stations, which account for nearly 80 percent of the market in Bengaluru and the state.

Online Khata Correction Facility Soon

BENGALURU
The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) plans to introduce an online khata correction facility to simplify property record updates. Citizens can correct details like location and ward number, but not ownership or property size. Around 25 lakh draft khata applications have been received, with over 10 lakh final e-Khatas issued so far. Applications are typically processed within five days if documents are complete. The system sees over 1,000 applications daily, with one e-khata issued every 30 seconds, said Special Commissioner Munish Moudgil. A rejection audit team has been formed, and an automatic mutation system with SMS alerts has also been introduced.

State Braces for Weak Monsoon, Water Stress

Storage levels in dams offer limited comfort, with reserves slightly lower than last year despite rising concerns

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Karnataka is staring at a potential water stress year, with forecasts indicating a below-normal monsoon across most regions. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said, citing inputs from the India Meteorological Department, that except for five districts, the state is likely to face rainfall deficit. While normal rainfall is expected in August, June and July may see delayed and reduced showers, with another dip likely in September.The warning has prompted the government to activate contingency plans and tighten accountability among district administrations. Officials have been directed to conserve water resources at least until mid-July, anticipating a delayed monsoon onset.Data presented at a high-level review meeting at Vidhana Soudha revealed that 213 taluks and 2,410 gram panchayats have been identified as vulnerable to drinking water shortages. Of these, 114 taluks and 598 gram panchayats are already facing distress. Authorities noted that 137 gram panchayats are currently dependent on tanker supply, while 515 have partial arrangements in place.The impact is widespread, with Kalaburagi reporting the highest number of affected gram panchayats at 147, followed by Tumakuru (141), Haveri (138), Mandya (130), Belagavi (127), Uttara Kannada (125) and Bagalkot (114).

Urban areas are also under pressure. Around 95 urban local bodies are experiencing water shortages, with 27 facing severe crisis. To mitigate the situation, the government has deployed 57 tankers supplying water to 145 wards, while 22 borewells have been hired to augment supply.

SC Internal Reservation: Cabinet to Form Technical Panel Led by Chief Secretary

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet has decided to constitute a technical committee headed by Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh to examine the issue of internal reservation within Scheduled Castes (SCs). The panel's report will be taken up for detailed discussion at the next Cabinet meeting scheduled for April 24.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The committee will include the Secretaries of the Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department and the Social Welfare Department. It has been tasked with studying the internal reservation framework and submitting recommendations to the government.

The issue of SC internal reservation will be discussed comprehensively, with a final decision expected in the next Cabinet meeting.

Sources said the Cabinet also witnessed sharp discussions on political developments linked to the Davanagere South by-election. Some ministers expressed concern over disciplinary action taken against minority leaders for alleged anti-party activities.

Minister Priyank Kharge reportedly questioned the action against Abdul Jabbar and Naseer Ahmed, stating it could send a negative message to the Muslim community. He cautioned that such decisions might lead to dissatisfaction among party supporters.Minister Satish Jarkiholi is also said to have voiced reservations, arguing that the action was taken in haste and could be perceived as a challenge by the community. According to sources, the developments have created unease among some leaders, who fear political repercussions.In a related development, Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar and Minister S. S. Mallikarjun reportedly walked out of the meeting midway, adding to the intensity of the discussions.Meanwhile, Law Minister H. K. Patil said the next Cabinet meeting will focus extensively on the internal reservation issue.

Cabinet Clears Rohith Vemula Bill; Rs 10 Lakh Fine for Caste Bias

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet has approved the Karnataka Rohith Vemula (Prevention of Discrimination, Exclusion or Injustice) (Right to Education and Dignity) Bill, 2026, proposing stringent penalties against caste-based discrimination in higher education institutions.Named after Rohith Vemula, the bill will be introduced in the upcoming monsoon session of the legislature. It aims to ensure equal access to education and safeguard the dignity of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students across public, private and deemed universities.A key provision mandates the establishment of an equity committee in every institution to address complaints related to harassment and caste bias. The panel will be chaired by an SC/ST member not below the rank of assistant professor and include six other members, with at least two students from SC/ST communities. Notably, 80 percent of the committee must comprise members from SC/ST backgrounds.

Institutions found guilty of violations could face penalties, including a fine of up to Rs 10 lakh. The bill also outlines a structured grievance redressal mechanism that prioritises reconciliation

before initiating a formal inquiry.

Hindu Outfit Seeks Cancellation of Munawar Faruqui Show in Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A Hindu organisation has urged city police to cancel a stand-up comedy show by Munawar Faruqui scheduled in Bengaluru on Saturday, citing concerns over law and order and potential disturbance to communal harmony.

The Hindu Janajagruti Samiti submitted a formal representation to Bengaluru Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh, requesting authorities to deny permission for the event. The group pointed to past controversies involving the comedian, including a 2021 case registered in Indore under sections of the IPC related to alleged hurt of religious sentiments. Faruqui was arrested in the case and later granted bail by the Supreme Court of India after spending over a month in custody. The matter remains pending.

The organisation also cited similar complaints from cities such as Prayagraj and Mumbai, alleging that some of Faruqui's performances contained objectionable content. It noted that several of his shows across cities including Bengaluru, Delhi, Pune, Hyderabad and Goa have previously been cancelled or denied permission due to anticipated protests and law and order concerns.In its representation, the Samiti stated that allowing the event in Bengaluru could potentially hurt public sentiments and trigger unrest. It urged the police to assess the background, examine possible law and order implications, and take preventive measures to avoid any untoward incidents.The group maintained that its appeal is aimed at preserving public peace and ensuring harmony among all sections of society.

WAIT AND WORRY: DELAYS MOUNT IN DOMESTIC LPG DELIVERIES

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

City households are grappling with growing anxiety as delays in domestic LPG cylinder deliveries stretch beyond two weeks, disrupting daily routines and forcing many to seek costly alternatives.

Consumers across Bengaluru report long waiting periods despite booking refills well in advance. J Manju, a domestic worker from Yelahanka, said she has been waiting for over 25 days for her Indian Oil Corporation cylinder. With a family of four, she has struggled to manage, even payig Rs 1,500 for a partially filled cylinder in desperation.

Ajith Kumar from Horamavu shared a similar experience with a cylinder booked through Hindustan Petroleum. After waiting two weeks, he visited the refilling station multiple times and was eventually asked to collect the cylinder himself, enduring long queues.In another case, a refill booked through Shri Vishnu Indane Gas Agency on March 25 remained undelivered even after 16 days. Households with only one cylinder are finding it particularly difficult to cope with the delays.Adding to the frustration are complaints about the grievance redressal system. Several consumers allege that complaints were marked as resolved without actual delivery, while others said delivery personnel were unresponsive, leaving them uncertain about timelines.

Responding to the concerns, a spokesperson from Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited maintained that the backlog in Bengaluru Urban district is limited to around three-and-a-half days. The company said it follows a strict FIFO (First In, First Out) system for LPG distribution.

Officials have advised consumers to use helpline services to obtain distributor details and escalate issues.

KERC Relief Sparks EV Charging Boom at Petrol Pumps in Karnataka

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A regulatory easing by the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission has triggered a rapid expansion of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure at petrol pumps across Karnataka, particularly around Bengaluru, as oil companies pivot towards cleaner mobility solutions.

Amid shifting energy demand and uncertainties linked to global fuel supply disruptions, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) are accelerating investments in EV charging networks. The push gained momentum after KERC, in December 2023, relaxed its earlier rule mandating transformers at fuel retail outlets. It directed Bangalore Electricity Supply Company to provide grid connectivity for EV charging stations without requiring transformers within petrol bunk premises.

The earlier regulation required outlets with more than 800 sq ft area or power consumption exceeding 35 kW to install transformers. However, OMCs had raised safety concerns, noting that such installations would violate norms set by the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation, which restrict electrical equipment near highly inflammable fuels like petrol, diesel and LPG.

Following these representations, KERC ruled in favour of the companies, paving the way for rapid deployment. As a result, 378 petrol pump outlets have applied to BESCOM to set up public EV charging stations. Of these, 307 have already been commissioned, while work is underway at the remaining sites.

Officials say this expansion will significantly benefit EV users by improving accessibility to charging points, especially during long-distance travel, and help address range anxiety.

BESCOM Managing Director N Shivashankara said the utility has adopted a facilitative approach to ensure faster approvals and reliable power supply. Internal processes such as technical feasibility checks, load sanctioning and infrastructure readiness have been streamlined to reduce delays.

He added that a single-window digital dashboard has been introduced to fast-track approvals. The platform enables end-to-end tracking, real-time updates and online documentation, improving coordination and transparency.

Bellandur Flyover Space Transformed into Public Area

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A once-neglected stretch beneath the Bellandur Flyover has been transformed into a clean and vibrant public space, marking a step towards reclaiming underutilised urban areas in the city.

The revamped space was inaugurated by Bengaluru East City Corporation Additional Commissioner (Development) Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar, with the project implemented through CSR support from Intel.

Officials said the area was previously filled with silt, debris and encroachments, including unauthorised vendors. The clean-up drive removed these obstacles, paving the way for redevelopment into a more accessible and people-friendly space. Landscaping and plantation work have enhanced the visual appeal, creating a green and welcoming environment.

As part of the initiative, 'suvidha' cabins were installed for pourakarmikas, providing sanitation workers with improved working conditions and access to basic amenities.

Speaking at the event, Lokhande said the project reflects the administration's commitment to building sustainable and inclusive urban spaces. The inauguration was attended by senior representatives from Intel, civic officials and pourakarmikas involved in maintaining the area.

Civic authorities said the project demonstrates how neglected infrastructure spaces can be repurposed effectively.

DISCONTENT DEEPENS

Cong Faces Ulema Backlash After Action Against 2 MLCs

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka Congress leadership is facing a strong backlash from Islamic scholars following disciplinary action against two MLCs and a reprimand issued to Housing Minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, signalling unease within a key minority support base.Members of Ulama-e-Karnataka condemned the move, stating it has caused widespread resentment and disappointment within the Muslim community. The body has announced plans to hold consultations with community leaders to decide on further steps to safeguard their interests.The controversy stems from action taken against MLCs Naseer Ahmed and Abdul Jabbar after the April 9 bypolls to Bagalkot and Davanagere South. Jabbar resigned as chairman of the KPCC Minority Wing and was stripped of primary membership, while Naseer Ahmed was removed as political secretary to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Zameer Ahmed Khan was also reportedly pulled up by the Chief Minister for not actively campaigning.Sources indicate that all three leaders are considered close to Siddaramaiah, with speculation that the action may have been influenced by the AICC leadership. Reports suggest that KPCC chief D. K. Shivakumar played a role in initiating the measures, allegedly targeting the Chief Minister's supporters.At a press conference, Ulama-e-Karnataka leaders said the developments had sent a negative message to minorities, particularly Muslims. They expressed concern that the action against the MLCs came even before the bypoll results were declared, deepening mistrust.Mufti Iftikhar Ahmad Qasmi, president of the Karnataka unit of Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind, said the decisions reflected indifference towards marginalised sections.

Utsav Trayana–Echoes of Every Path

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

"Utsav Trayana," hosted at BMS College of Engineering, was inaugurated on Friday, transforming the campus into a vibrant space filled with energy, creativity, and celebration.

The opening ceremony was graced by chief guests, renowned music director and singer Gurukiran Shetty, actor Darling Krishna, and actress Chaitra J Achar. The event was also presided by the members of the Management, Principal, Vice Principal and other dignitaries.

For the first time, 100 percent tuition fee waive off was initiated for the students who secured CET rank within 1000 and students whose parents are from defence background. The winners of the open house project exhibition were also felicitated with cash prize.

The Fest will showcase talents from across various colleges over the next two days.

HC seeks Centre's reply on gender self-ID

HC has directed the Centre to respond to petitions challenging a law that allegedly restricts the right of gender minorities to self-identify

CH NEWS
BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has sought a response from the Central Government on petitions challenging provisions of the Sexual Minorities (Protection and Rights) Amendment Act, 2026, which are alleged to curtail the right of gender minorities to self-identify.

A single-judge bench headed by Justice Sachin Shankar Magadam issued notice to the Centre while hearing two separate petitions filed by transgender individuals, including Maya, who has been undergoing hormone treatment for several years. The petitions raise concerns over access to essential services and recognition under the amended law.

During the hearing, counsel for the petitioners argued that the amended law excludes them from the definition of transgender persons under Section 2(k) of the 2019 Act, thereby affecting their eligibility for services. One petitioner, currently seeking a passport with updated gender details, has sought priority processing, while the other expressed concerns over continuation of medical treatment.

The petitioners sought interim relief, contending that the amendment could disrupt access to healthcare and official documentation. However, the Centre opposed interim relief, stating there was no evidence of denial of services or cancellation of documents such as Aadhaar or PAN cards.

The court noted the submissions and adjourned the matter, directing the Centre to file its response.

The amendment law replaces self-identification with a certification process requiring approval from a District Magistrate based on recommendations of a medical board. It also narrows the definition of sexual minorities, triggering legal challenges.

QUICK READ

CM Siddaramaiah should have stood firm, says KN Rajanna

BENGALURU

Former Minister K. N. Rajanna on Friday criticised Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, calling him "helpless" and saying he should have taken a firm stand on key issues. Speaking in Bengaluru, Rajanna expressed disappointment, stating he did not expect such a stance from the CM and questioned the reasons behind his neutrality. He alleged that those supporting the Chief Minister were being targeted, reflecting concerns voiced by party workers. Rajanna said vested interests often undermine loyal party members and stressed that stronger leadership was needed. On cabinet reshuffle, he supported giving opportunities to others, clarifying he was not seeking a ministerial post.

Road widening, cleanliness works inspected

BENGALURU

Bengaluru West City Corporation Commissioner K. V. Rajendra on Friday inspected road widening plans, cleanliness measures and preparations for the Census 2027 in Padmanabhanagar division. He reviewed the proposed widening of a 1.2 km stretch of Ittamadu Road under the B-SMILE programme and directed officials to conduct joint inspections and take necessary action. Rajendra also assessed sanitation efforts in Hosakerehalli ward, instructing strict enforcement against illegal garbage dumping. Officials, including Deputy Commissioner Syeda Afreen Bhanu, engineers and staff, were present during the inspection.

H5N1 Bird Flu Detected in Hesaraghatta, Poultry Farm Shut

BENGALURU

An outbreak of H5N1 avian influenza has been reported in Karnataka, with the virus detected at a government-run poultry farm in Hesaraghatta, prompting swift containment measures by authorities.

The infection was confirmed during the first round of testing conducted with approval from the central government. The affected farm, which supplies poultry to several parts of the state, has been shut down immediately to prevent further spread.

As part of the containment protocol, all birds at the facility were culled and safely buried. Officials said this step was necessary to eliminate the source of infection and reduce the risk of transmission. The farm will remain closed until further notice.

Authorities have also quarantined workers associated with the poultry unit as a precautionary measure. Medical and veterinary teams are monitoring their health closely to ensure there is no risk of human infection. The state government has issued alerts to veterinary officers and local authorities, directing them to intensify surveillance in surrounding areas. Panchayats near the affected zone have been instructed to inspect poultry sheds and chicken shops to detect any signs of infection early.

Officials stressed the need for heightened vigilance, noting that the virus has now entered the state. Special focus is being placed on monitoring poultry movement and ensuring strict adherence to biosecurity measures.

The outbreak information was shared by the central government, following which the state administration activated emergency response systems. Authorities said continuous monitoring and timely action will be crucial in preventing the spread of bird flu and safeguarding public health.

Rabid dog scare at BMTC depot raises concerns

BENGALURU

A serious safety concern has emerged at a Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation depot in Peenya, where staff have reported the presence of suspected rabid stray dogs inside the premises, triggering fear among employees.Officials at Depot-22 have formally written to senior authorities, including the Chief Security Officer and Vigilance Officer, seeking urgent intervention. The complaint highlights that at least two stray dogs suspected to be infected with Rabies have been frequently spotted within the depot.tAccording to staff, one of the dogs has shown aggressive behaviour and is believed to be severely affected, moving unpredictably across operational areas. The second dog has reportedly exhibited symptoms such as excessive drooling, a common indicator.

Bengaluru Set for Online Khata Corrections as GBA Speeds Up e-Khata Services

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

In a major push towards digitisation, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) is set to roll out an online khata correction facility, enabling property owners to update key details without visiting government offices.

Under the proposed system, citizens can correct entries such as location details and ward numbers through an online platform. However, officials clarified that critical fields like ownership details and property measurements will remain locked from online modification to prevent misuse.

The move comes amid growing adoption of the e-Khata system. Special Commissioner Munish Moudgil said the GBA has received nearly 25 lakh draft applications, of which over 10 lakh final e-Khatas have already been issued.

Authorities said the system has been streamlined for faster processing, with applications typically cleared within five days if documents are in order. The platform continues to see strong usage, with more than 1,000 applications filed daily and one e-Khata issued every 30 seconds.

The upcoming correction facility, combined with faster approvals, audit checks, and automated mutation, is expected to significantly improve transparency, efficiency, and ease of access in Bengaluru's property documentation system

To enhance fairness, the GBA has established a rejection audit team to review denied applications and reverse decisions if found unjustified. This is expected to boost accountability and reduce grievances among applicants.

In addition, an automatic mutation system has been introduced to ensure seamless updates of ownership records following property registration or inheritance. Citizens will receive SMS alerts once the process is completed, reducing the need for repeated follow-ups.

Black ticket racket busted near Chinnaswamy Stadium,

BENGALURU

In a major crackdown during the Indian Premier League season, the Central Crime Branch (CCB) has unearthed a black-market ticket racket near M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, seizing over 100 tickets being sold at inflated prices.

The operation, led by CCB DCP Sriharibabu, resulted in the arrest of Chandrashekhar, a canteen staff member working with Lakshmi Caterers inside the stadium. He was caught selling tickets priced at Rs 15,000 for as high as Rs 19,000.During questioning, Chandrashekhar allegedly revealed the involvement of Ganesh Harikesh, said to be associated with the Karnataka State Cricket Association. Police suspect he played a key role in sourcing and distributing tickets for illegal resale.

Investigations indicate that tickets were procured online through private firms, including an entity identified as Ticket Genie, and diverted into the black market.

Minister Warns Hospital Heads over Drug Shortage, ICU Crisis, Hygiene

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Medical Education and Skill Development Minister Dr Sharanaprakash R Patil on Friday issued a stern warning to directors of government-run hospitals across Karnataka over persistent complaints of drug shortages, inadequate ICU facilities and poor sanitation.Chairing a review meeting at Vikasa Soudha, the minister cited observations by the Karnataka Lokayukta and public grievances regarding irregular drug availability. Pulling up officials, he questioned the delay in procurement and said, "Why do you wait until drug stocks are exhausted before inviting tenders?" He directed all institutions to initiate procurement at least three months in advance to avoid disruptions in patient care.Addressing ICU shortages, Dr Patil sought explanations from officials of Victoria Hospital and ordered immediate corrective measures. He instructed Additional Chief Secretary Mohammed Mohsin and Director of Medical Education B. L. Sujatha Rathod to earmark an entire floor in the upcoming Victoria Hospital building for additional ICU beds.

Drunk test drive sparks crash in Mahadevapura, showroom role probed

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A drunk driving incident during a test drive in Mahadevapura has raised serious concerns over safety protocols at automobile showrooms, after a man crashed into multiple vehicles, leaving one person injured.According to police, the accused, identified as Abhilash, had visited a Mahindra showroom in Vigneshwara Nagar. Despite allegedly being under the influence of alcohol, he was allowed to take a vehicle out for a test drive by showroom staff.During the drive, Abhilash reportedly lost control of the vehicle and rammed into four vehicles on the road. In the collision, a man named Ramesh sustained serious injuries, including a leg fracture, and is currently undergoing treatment at a private hospital. Following the crash, locals gathered at the spot and allegedly assaulted Abhilash in anger over his reckless driving. He too sustained injuries and is receiving treatment.The Bengaluru Traffic Police have registered a case at the Mahadevapura Traffic Police Station under relevant provisions of the IMV Act and sections 125(a) and 281 of the BNS, which relate to negligent and dangerous driving.

Rottweiler attack in HBR Layout injures elderly man, sparks fear

BENGALURU

Residents of HBR Layout are on edge after a pet Rottweiler attacked an elderly man, marking the second such incident in the area within a week.The latest attack occurred around noon on 8th Main Road when the victim was about to leave on his bike. The dog reportedly lunged at him and bit his leg, causing bleeding injuries. Disturbingly, the owner was present at the spot but failed to prevent the attack, raising concerns about pet control and accountability.CCTV footage of the incident has surfaced, capturing the dog aggressively attacking the man and the victim struggling as he sustained injuries.Residents say this is not an isolated case. Just days earlier, the same dog allegedly attacked another person at night, with visuals of that incident also circulating. The repeated aggression has heightened anxiety among locals, especially senior citizens and those living alone.Police visited the spot and conducted a preliminary inspection following the latest complaint. However, residents are demanding stricter action against negligent pet ownership and immediate steps to prevent further incidents.

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GAGAN S R 470 (94%)
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SNEHA S 460 (92%)
ANIKA SUSHMA RAJ 456 (91.2%)
DHANUSH V 456 (91.2%)
KALPANA R 456 (91.2%)
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SHRAVYA S 454 (90.8%)
VEERESH GOWDA B S 454 (90.8%)
ARCHANA S 453 (90.6%)
DIGANTH L 451 (90.2%)
POSHIKA C 450 (90%)
GAYANA M 449 (89.8%)
RITHIK V 449 (89.8%)
NIKITHA M 444 (88.8%)
SHRUTHI P 440 (88.%)
KRISHNA PRASAD NAYAK 439 (87.8%)
DEEKSHA R 433 (86.6%)
DEEPAK GOWDA G 432 (86.4%)
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BHAVANA K U 402 (80.4%)
AKASH N 399 (79.8%)
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QUICK READ

Lightning strike kills farmer, cattle in Koppal

GANGAVATI

A farmer died and six cattle were killed due to lightning during untimely rains in Gangavati taluk of Koppal district. Kariappa Dyavanna Madaneri, 36, died on the spot when lightning struck him while covering paddy in his field at night. In a separate incident, six cows belonging to two families died after lightning hit a sheep shelter, causing losses worth □3.5 lakh. Heavy rains also damaged over 60 electric poles in Chikkamagaluru district, disrupting power supply and traffic. Officials said restoration work is underway while residents faced difficulties due to fallen trees and blocked roads.

Addapallakki Mahotsava meeting scheduled

SHIVAMOGGA

A preliminary meeting for the Addapallakki Mahotsava, set to be held after 34 years, will take place on April 19 at 9.30 am at Bekkinakal Math. The festival is scheduled for May 16 and 17. The meeting will be held in the presence of several seers and over 32 math heads. Leaders including MP B Y Raghavendra and other committee members will participate. Organisers said discussions will focus on preparations and planning for the two day event. Citizens, community members and officials have been invited to attend and share suggestions to ensure the grand success of the festival.

Student killed in car lorry crash

KAPU

A student from Manipal died and two others were injured after a car rammed into a lorry near Pangala on National Highway 66 in the early hours of Friday. The deceased has been identified as Shreyas Acharya, who was driving the car. The injured, Darwin and Surya, are undergoing treatment. Police said the car, heading towards Udupi from Mangaluru, hit the lorry from behind due to overspeeding and negligence. The impact severely damaged the vehicle and trapped the driver inside. He later died on the way to hospital. A case has been registered at Kapu police station.

Karnataka declares war on drugs, cybercrime: HM

Karnataka Home Minister Parameshwar said state is intensifying fight against drugs and cybercrime, citing major recent seizures

BELAGAVI

Karnataka Home Minister Dr. G. Parameshwar on Thursday said the state has declared a strong fight against narcotics and cybercrime, calling them major challenges facing the police department.

He was speaking after laying the foundation stone and inaugurating the City Police Commissionerate and District Police buildings in Belagavi.

The Home Minister said that drugs are being brought into the state in large quantities and strict action is being taken against those involved. He noted that drugs worth ₹24 crore were seized in Bengaluru recently and added that the police have confiscated and destroyed narcotics worth thousands of crores in recent times.

He also said that the government has conducted awareness programmes reaching around 15 lakh students to educate them about the dangers of drug abuse.

Turning to cybercrime, he said while general crime rates are declining, online crimes are increasing rapidly. To tackle this, cyber labs will be set up in every district, and police personnel, including constables, will be trained in cybercrime investigation and prevention.

Dr. Parameshwar said Karnataka ranks first in providing justice delivery in the country and highlighted that a police station in Raichur district has been ranked among the top in

India. He added that more than 1,000 police stations in the state are being upgraded to become more citizen-friendly.

He said the government has prioritised improving police infrastructure, including housing facilities. As part of this, quarters for 100 personnel under the Belagavi City Police Commissionerate were inaugurated, and housing projects for police staff are being expanded across the state.The Home Minister added that strong law and order has helped Karnataka attract over ₹10 lakh crore in investments. He said the government has ensured no major communal unrest in the last three years.Senior police officials, MLAs, and administrative officers were present at the event.

Complete civic works before monsoon, MLA warns officials

SHIVAMOGGA

MLA S.N. Channabasappa has issued a stern warning to officials to resolve civic issues before the onset of the monsoon, stressing that delays will not be tolerated.

Chairing a meeting with officials from departments including the City Corporation, MESCOM, Smart City, PWD, and water supply authorities, he said public grievances must be addressed immediately. "No more excuses. All pending works should be completed before the rains begin," he said.

A major concern raised was the delay in removing 849 electric poles linked to underground (UG) cable work under the Smart City project. Officials cited public objections and technical issues, but the MLA directed them to fix responsibility on contractors and complete the work within the deadline.

Incomplete UG cable works in six new layouts, non-functioning streetlights in areas like Basavanagudi, and unfinished works in Tilaknagar were also highlighted. The MLA expressed displeasure over delays in opening e-toilets even after four years of construction. Out of 18 identified units, 14 are in use, while four remain non-functional. Officials assured that the functional units would be upgraded to women-friendly facilities soon.

The condition of footpaths and roads also came under scrutiny. Authorities were instructed to issue notices to contractors for poorly constructed footpaths and ensure corrective action. Citizens demanded proper footpaths and streetlights in several areas, including Vidyanagar and Navule layouts.

The meeting also discussed delays in issuing e-khatas due to staff being engaged in census and survey work. Out of 1.25 lakh applications, only 30,000 have been processed so far.

The MLA also informed that a proposal has been submitted for constructing a new bridge over the Tunga River on B.H. Road, replacing the old structure.Officials from various departments and members of the Citizens' Welfare Forum were present.

MLA S.N. Channabasappa warned officials to complete civic works before monsoon, addressing delays in Smart City projects, streetlights, UG cables, and e-toilets

MP Prabha Mallikarjun criticized Women's Reservation Bill process, citing lack of consultation, transparency, and parliamentary discussion

MP questions transparency in Women's Reservation Bill process

DAVANAGERE

Davanagere MP Dr. Prabha Mallikarjun has raised concerns over the manner in which the Women's Reservation Bill is being implemented, stating that the process lacks transparency and adequate discussion.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha during a special session, she criticized the government for introducing multiple bills within a short span without sufficient consultation. "Three important bills have been brought within three days. There has been no proper discussion or opportunity for all parties to give suggestions," she said.

She questioned why wider consultations were not held before presenting the bill, stressing that dialogue and cooperation are essential in a democratic system. She noted

that decisions of such national importance should be taken only after building consensus among all stakeholders.

Clarifying her party's position, she said the Congress has consistently supported women's reservation. She pointed out that women's representation at the grassroots level was strengthened through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments during the tenure of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

However, she expressed concern over the current approach, stating that linking the bill with delimitation and census-related processes could affect fair representation. She said that without updated census data and clarity on migration patterns, restructuring political representation for the future may not be appropriate.

Dr. Mallikarjun also raised concerns about the possible impact on southern states like Karnataka, questioning whether states contributing significantly to the national economy may face reduced representation.She further criticized the absence of a separate quota for OBC women, stating that the bill does not ensure complete and inclusive representation, but rather provides only limited opportunities.Her remarks highlighted the need for a more inclusive and transparent approach to implementing women's reservation.

Dharwad lecture series opens Sanskrit wisdom talk

DHARWAD

Dharwad Katte inaugurated its Sanskrit lecture series with a talk on Lakshana Vritti in Sanskrit poetics The programme began with Prof Shrinivasa Varakhedi Vice Chancellor of Central Sanskrit University New Delhi who said Sanskrit ideas remain useful today The lecture was delivered by Dr Thakur Shivlochan Shandilya from Banaras Hindu University.

Train services restored with revised timings

DAKSHINA KANNADA

Passenger train services between Subrahmanya Road, Edamangala and Narimogaru have resumed after being affected by track and electrical maintenance works. South Western Railway, Mysuru Division, announced the restoration along with revised schedules for passengers.

Earlier, trains numbered 56629 and 56630 operating between Mangaluru Central and Subrahmanya Road were cancelled for maintenance work. Officials have now confirmed that both services will run again as per their regular timetable.

Changes have also been made to the operation of train number 56229. The earlier delay of 55 minutes has now

been reduced. From April 16 to June 4, 2026, the train will run with a delay of 35 minutes. From June 5 to June 9, it will operate on its normal schedule without any delay.

In addition, train number 56630 will run 15 minutes late on selected dates between April and June, while operating on time on other days, including June 6 and June 9. Railway officials have requested passengers to carefully check the updated timings before planning their journey to avoid inconvenience.Meanwhile, in another development, a new flight service from Mysuru to Hyderabad will begin from May 1. The flight is expected to reduce travel time to about one hour and forty minutes, improving connectivity for passengers traveling between the two cities.Authorities said these updates aim to improve transportation services and ensure smoother travel for the public.

Free medical camp held at Karaya village

OPPINANGADI

A free medical check-up camp and health awareness programme was successfully held at Karaya village under the joint initiative of Hidaya Foundation Mangaluru, Al Asas Foundation Trust Karaya, Shamsul Huda Youngmen's Association and Yenepoya Medical College Hospital, Deralakatte.

Inaugurating the camp, Dr. Ashwini Shetty stressed the importance of early diagnosis and preventive healthcare. He said people should not wait until they fall seriously ill, but instead undergo regular health check-ups to detect diseases at an early stage and receive timely treatment.

He also addressed misconceptions about free medical camps, stating that such initiatives play a crucial role in identifying health issues, especially in rural areas where access to healthcare is limited.

He added that the camp included a mobile medical unit equipped with modern facilities, with special attention given to women's health.

Hidaya Foundation Executive Chairman Mohammad Hanif Haji, who presided over the programme, said the organization has been conducting similar camps across the district for over 15 years.

He noted that many underprivileged patients have benefited through their collaboration with Yenepoya Medical College Hospital.

Koppal launches helpline for summer water issues

KOPPAL

A helpline has been launched in Koppal district to help people facing drinking water problems during the summer season. Koppal Zilla Panchayat CEO Varnit Negi said complaints from rural areas in all seven taluks will be addressed quickly. Officials said around 133 villages may face water shortage in the next three months due to heat conditions.

Residents can report issues through district and taluk level helpline numbers set up by authorities.

Water will be supplied using tankers and private borewells wherever required to ensure basic needs.

LABOUR SHORTAGE THREATENS CONSTRUCTION SECTOR GROWTH IN DISTRICT

MANGALURU

The construction sector in Dakshina Kannada district is facing serious challenges due to a shortage of labour and essential raw materials, raising concerns about a possible slowdown, contractors said on Friday.Addressing a press conference at the city press club, District Civil Contractors Association President Mahabala Kottari said the industry has been struggling for the past few years due to inadequate supply of key materials like red stone, sand, and M-sand. The situation has worsened recently as a large number of migrant workers have returned to their native states.He explained that due to elections, electoral roll revisions, and festivals in several northern states, many skilled workers have left the district and have not yet returned. "Around 90 percent of migrant labourers who went home have not come back, creating a major gap in workforce availability," he said.The district relies heavily on workers from states like West Bengal, especially for skilled jobs.

DISTRICT PROCUREMENT SETUPT

Farmers urged to register for paddy procurement

DAVANAGERE

District authorities have initiated steps to procure paddy under the Minimum Support Price (MSP) scheme for the current monsoon season, with officials urging farmers to register at the earliest.

Deputy Commissioner Gangadhar Swamy said the central government will purchase paddy through the Food and Civil Supplies Corporation and approved agencies.

He advised eligible farmers to complete registration at the remaining four procurement

centres in the district, excluding Jagalur, without waiting for harvest time.

Speaking at a task force committee meeting held at his office, the DC instructed officials from the Agriculture and Food Departments to make immediate arrangements for smooth procurement operations.

Farmers have been permitted to sell between 25 and 50 quintals of paddy per acre directly at procurement centres. The payment will be transferred directly to their bank accounts to ensure transparency and timely transactions.

The government has fixed the MSP at ₹2,369 per quintal for normal paddy and ₹2,389 per quintal for 'A' grade paddy.

Officials stated that procurement will continue until the end of May.

The DC also directed the Food Department to coordinate with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to develop and maintain proper software systems for recording procurement data before and after transactions.

Authorities emphasized that early registration will help farmers avoid last-minute delays and ensure they receive the benefits of the MSP scheme smoothly during the procurement season.

Degree empowers social change

SHIVAMOGGA

A graduation celebration at Sahyadri Arts College highlighted the importance of education as a tool for social transformation, with State Government Employees Association President C.S. Shadakshari urging students to take responsibility after completing their degrees.

Inaugurating the programme, Shadakshari said a degree is not just a certificate but a powerful means to bring positive change in society. He noted that many students feel uncertain after graduation, especially in today's competitive job market, but emphasized the need for determination and confidence.

He said education is not limited to wealth or privilege and added that opportunities are available to those who make the effort to use them wisely. He encouraged students to stay focused, avoid negative influences, and work towards building meaningful careers.

Highlighting the role of law education, he said it has the ability to shape young minds and help them contribute responsibly to society. He stressed that patience and commitment are essential for success and reminded graduates that social responsibility.

QUICK READ

Mandya to host Basavanna Jayanti Award event

MANDYA

The Kasturi Sirigannada Vedike State Unit will organise the 893rd birth anniversary of Vishwaguru Basavanna along with the Basava Shri Award ceremony for poets and scholars on April 20 at 3 pm in Seva Kiran Vridrashram, Mandya city. The programme will be inaugurated by M Guruprasad, president of Rashtriya Basava Dal. G V Nagaraju will preside over the event. Several poets, folk artists and writers will participate as chief guests. Basava Shri awards will be presented to selected writers and contributors for their literary service. Organisers said vachana recitations will also be held, highlighting Basavanna's teachings and values during the celebration event.

Sri Shankaracharya Jayanti to be celebrated on April 21

CHITRADURGA

Sri Shankaracharya Jayanti will be observed on April 21 at 11 am in the Deputy Commissioner's Office Hall in Chitradurga city. The programme is jointly organised by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Kannada and Culture Department and Municipal Council. Minister D Sudhakar will inaugurate the event. Several MLAs, MPs and other public representatives will attend, while MLA K C Virendra Pappi will preside over the ceremony. Officials said the event will include speeches and cultural performances. K R Ramadevi will deliver a lecture and a musical programme will be presented by Meenakshi Bhat an her team during the celebration.

Summer camp for children at Prakas Bhavan

CHAMARAJANAGAR

A three-day summer camp for children will be held from April 20 to 22 at Prakas Bhavan of Prajapita Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya on Jodi Road in Chamarajanagar. The camp is organised for children aged 6 to 16 to support their all-round personality development, improve concentration and build positive values. Activities will include games, yoga, meditation, aerobic exercises and sessions on positive thinking and discipline. Organisers said the programme aims to encourage confidence, unity and good citizenship among children through spiritual learning. Registration is required in advance and interested participants can contact the organisers through the given phone numbers for details.

'Women must be treated with respect at police stations'

KARNATAKA WOMEN'S COMMISSION CHIEF NAGALAKSHMI CHAUDHARY URGED POLICE SENSITIVITY, QUICK RESPONSE, AND ICC FORMATION IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

MANDYA

Karnataka State Women's Commission Chairperson Dr. Nagalakshmi Chaudhary has directed police personnel across the district to treat women with dignity and respond promptly to their complaints at all police stations.

She was speaking while presiding over a "Mahila Jan Sunvai" (public hearing) held at the Zilla Panchayat Cauvery Hall, organised as per the directions of the National Women's Commission.

Dr. Chaudhary said that gender sensitivity programmes must be strengthened to ensure women do not face inconvenience when approaching police stations. She instructed education officials to ensure that Internal Complaints Committees are formed in all schools and colleges and that awareness programmes are conducted regularly.She also directed that quarterly review meetings be held and compliance reports be submitted to the Women's Commission. Emphasising better accessibility for women, she suggested installing QR codes in all police stations to enable easy online complaint registration and ensure a more digital-friendly policing system.The Commission Chairperson further said that safety measures for women and children should be strengthened through increased patrolling and awareness initiatives. She recommended that helpline numbers be prominently displayed in public places such as bus stands, parks, and hospitals. She also stressed the need to improve facilities in hostels for women and children under the Social Welfare Department, including proper lighting, cleanliness, drinking water, and sanitation facilities. She suggested setting up breastfeeding (child care) rooms at all bus stands in the district.Dr. Chaudhary appreciated the police department for its efforts in addressing issues related to microfinance harassment and said the district has set an example in handling such cases.Officials

informed the meeting that awareness programmes against female foeticide and child marriage are being conducted widely across the district.Police officials also reported that in 2024, out of 420 missing women cases, 410 were traced, and in 2025, 468 out of 483 missing persons were successfully found. Complaints from affected women were later received by the Commission Chairperson.

Chikkaballapura launches water sustainability training initiative project

CHIKKABALLAPURA

The district administration has launched a new training program on water sustainability and conservation for urban local bodies. District Magistrate G Prabhu said the project aims to improve water management, reuse treated water, and build stronger systems in six towns. The initiative is being carried out with support from the Indian Institute for Human Settlements and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure. It will focus on studying water use, identifying gaps in supply, and preparing plans for safe and efficient reuse of resources. The project will also help local bodies improve planning skills and respond better to

Chikkaballapura launched water sustainability training for urban bodies with IIHS and CDRI, focusing on reuse, planning, and climate-resilient water management across six towns

climate change and water shortages in future years. Experts from CDRI said Chikkaballapura is one of the selected districts for this global water resilience program along with other countries. The program will run from April 2026 to March 2028 across six urban local bodies including Bagepalli, Chintamani and others. Officials said the training will build capacity in data driven planning, wastewater management and disaster risk reduction for cities. Stakeholders from municipal bodies, technical agencies and partner organisations participated in the inaugural session and discussed implementation steps. CDRI representative Maheshwar Rajashekar said the project supports climate resilient infrastructure planning and was selected from over 100 proposals. He added that the effort will strengthen water security and help small towns manage growing pressure on natural resources. The district administration said the training is an important step towards long term sustainable urban development in the region. Officials said the program will continue with regular workshops, technical guidance and monitoring to ensure effective implementation .

MLA B.R. Patil announced grand Basava Jayanti in Jevargi with unified procession and Basavanna-only portrait rule

Unified effort planned for Basava Jayanti Celebration

JEVARGI

MLA B.R. Patil said that cooperation from everyone is essential to celebrate Basava Jayanti in a grand and meaningful way. He was speaking after inaugurating the preparatory meeting held at Gurukul School on Vijayapura Road in Jevargi. He also serves as the District President of the Basava Jayanti Festival Committee. This year, different organisations have come together to celebrate the event on a large scale, instead of separate groups as in previous years. He said a grand procession featuring portraits of 12th century Kayaka Sharanas, including Basavanna, will be taken out. He also stressed that only the portrait of Basavanna should be used during the Jayanti celebrations and no other images should be included.

More than five thousand devotees from Jevargi and Yadrami taluks are expected to take part in the celebration. Committee members, including legislators, former MLAs, and local leaders, attended the meeting and discussed arrangements for the event. They emphasized unity among all groups to ensure the celebration is peaceful and successful. The organisers said that Basava Jayanti reflects the teachings of Basavanna and promotes equality and social harmony.

They requested people from Jevargi and nearby areas to participate in large numbers and support all arrangements for the smooth conduct of the event. Local leaders expressed confidence that collective efforts will make this year's Basava Jayanti one of the most memorable celebrations in Jevargi town region event.

Students protest hostel relocation in Aland issue

ALAND

Students and villagers in Aland strongly opposed the government's decision to relocate the post-matric girls' hostel under the Backward Classes Welfare Department from Kadaganchi village to Aland town and convert it into a boys' hostel. It is learnt that the move followed a letter written by MLA and Policy and Planning Commission Vice Chairman B.R. Patil to the Under-Secretary of the department on January 19, 2026. Fearing that the relocation would affect education, students protested on the streets in the scorching sun. They raised slogans demanding that the hostel not be shifted under any circumstances and expressed anger against the authorities and elected representatives. Student Aishwarya Yadgiri said the move would disrupt education.

19 cases booked under tobacco control act

CHITRADURGA

In a drive against tobacco use violations, the District Tobacco Control Cell conducted surprise inspections in Holalkere town targeting bars, restaurants, and shops selling tobacco products.

The joint operation was carried out by teams from the Health Department, Municipality, and Police Department under the guidance of District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr. G.P. Renuprasad and District Tobacco Control Officer Dr. Rekha.

Officials said the raid was conducted as part of efforts to reduce tobacco-related deaths among youth and to enforce compliance with the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003.

During the inspection, authorities educated shop owners and the public about the

health risks of smoking and chewing tobacco products in public spaces.

They also instructed shopkeepers to display mandatory warning boards under Sections 4, 6A, and 6B of the Act.Strict action was taken against violators during the drive. A total of 19 cases were registered, including 14 cases for smoking in public places under Section 4, resulting in fines of ₹1,550, and 5 cases for selling tobacco to minors under Section 6A, with fines of ₹550. In total, ₹2,100 was collected as penalty.Officials said such enforcement drives will continue to ensure compliance with tobacco control laws and to create awareness among the public about the harmful effects of tobacco use.Several health officials, municipal staff, and police personnel participated in the operation.

WATER VITAL FOR LIFE AND ANIMALS: JUDGE

CHIKKABALLAPURA

A programme highlighting the importance of water conservation and animal welfare was held at the Chikkaballapura court premises on Friday as part of World Water Day celebrations.The event was jointly organised by the District Legal Services Authority, the Lawyers Association of Chikkaballapura, and the organisation Water for Voiceless.Addressing the gathering, Justice T.P. Ramalingegowda said that water is essential for the survival of all living beings, including humans, animals, and birds. He stressed that people should make efforts to provide water to voiceless animals wherever possible, especially during hot weather conditions.He also highlighted an ongoing initiative to plant five lakh trees across Chikkaballapura district and said that preliminary steps for the programme have already begun. He appealed to all stakeholders and the public to extend their cooperation to make the environmental initiative successful.Officials present on the occasion included District and Sessions Judge Latha Kumari M., Principal Family Judge Sharada B., Senior Civil Judge and CJM Umesh H.K., Senior Civil Judge .

Kalaburagi CET exam faces tight security measures

KALABURAGI

Officials in Kalaburagi have started strict preparations for the CET examination scheduled on April 23 and 24 under the Karnataka Examination Authority.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Rayappa Hunasagi has directed all officers to ensure smooth and fair conduct of the exam. He said about 14,405 students will appear across 35 examination centers in the district.

District level officers have been appointed as observers for each center and must arrive 30 minutes early to supervise arrangements.

Authorities have been instructed to ensure seating, electricity, drinking water and toilet facilities at all exam centers in advance.

Candidates have been advised to ensure respectful frisking procedures without hurting religious sentiments.

All electronic items including mobile phones, Bluetooth devices, pagers and calculators are strictly banned inside examination halls. A 200-meter radius around centres has been declared a restricted zone, with police enforcing strict action.

CCTV cameras and webcasting will monitor the exams, and center heads will be responsible for any irregularities.

Kalaburagi holds workshop on anti-trafficking awareness program

KALABURAGI

A one-day workshop on prevention of immoral trafficking of women and children was held at the Government Girls Children's Home in Kalaburagi. Senior Civil Judge and Member Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority Srinivas Navale inaugurated the programme. He said trafficking of women and children is a serious crime and needs strong coordination between departments. He asked officials to create awareness, provide protection to victims and ensure strict action against offenders through law enforcement.

Resource person Brind Badhi explained methods used in trafficking, workplace harassment, and cyber crime related exploitation. Officials from Women and Child Development Department said trained staff should actively support rescue and rehabilitation efforts. District and taluk level officers including Zilla Panchayat, Child Protection Unit and other departments attended the workshop. They discussed better coordination between departments to prevent trafficking.

JUSTICE AWARENESS SPEECH

Follow Ambedkar's constitutional values daily: Judge

CHITRADURGA

Principal District and Sessions Judge Rona Vasudev has called upon citizens to adopt the values of the Constitution in their daily life, saying that true respect to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar lies in practicing his ideals rather than merely remembering him on special occasions.

He was speaking after inaugurating the 135th birth anniversary programme of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar organised by the Chitradurga Bar Association at the Advocates' Hall in

the city on Friday.

Judge Vasudev said Ambedkar should not be understood only through the Preamble of the Constitution, but through the entire constitutional framework. He cautioned that simply reading the Preamble without implementing its principles in real life makes such practices meaningless.

He noted that while people often speak about rights, equal attention is not given to fundamental duties outlined in Part IVA of the Constitution. Citizens must reflect on whether they are acting with sincerity, honesty, and a spirit of brotherhood towards the nation, he said.He added that celebrating Ambedkar's legacy once a year is not enough and urged people to follow his teachings in everyday conduct. Only then can genuine tribute be paid to the architect of the Constitution, he said.Bar Association President H.S. Maheshwarappa said India can achieve global leadership only when citizens balance their rights with responsibilities. He highlighted Ambedkar's contributions not only as a constitutional architect but also as an economist whose early writings influenced financial thought in India, including the establishment of the Reserve Bank of India.

Speakers also recalled Ambedkar's vision for river linking, gender equality in education, and his study of multiple global constitutions to frame India's system of equality.

QUICK READ

Sri Bhagirath Jayanti to be observed on April 23

CHITRADURGA

Sri Bhagirath Jayanti will be celebrated on April 23 at 11 am at Maharshi Valmiki Bhavan in Chitradurga city. The programme is jointly organised by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Kannada and Culture Department and Municipal Council. Minister D Sudhakar will inaugurate the event. Several MLAs, MPs and other public representatives will attend, while MLA K C Virendra Pappi will preside over the ceremony. Officials said a procession with folk art troupes will begin at 9.30 am and proceed through the city. Cultural programmes and speeches will highlight Bhagirath's contributions and teachings during the celebration event.

Aland leader demands sugarcane payment for farmers

ALAND

Former Gram Panchayat vice president Harsha Guttedar has urged authorities to immediately release pending payments to sugarcane farmers who supplied produce to the cooperative sugar factory in Bhusanur. He said farmers have not received dues even three months after supply, while crushing operations at the factory have already stopped. In a letter to the district collector, he highlighted that the delay has caused severe financial hardship and affected ongoing agricultural work. He also raised concerns over water shortages from Amarja dam and drinking water scarcity for cattle. He warned of a large protest if payments are not cleared within a week.

Foot-And-Mouth vaccination drive from April 23

Chikkaballapura DC urged farmers to use 1962 helpline for mobile veterinary care and emergency livestock treatment services

CHIKKABALLAPURA

District Magistrate G. Prabhu has appealed to farmers in the district to make use of the toll-free emergency veterinary service number 1962 to access doorstep animal healthcare facilities.He made the appeal while reviewing the progress of the Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccination programme and mobile veterinary unit services at the District Magistrate's office hall.The DC said that farmers can call the helpline for emergency treatment of livestock conditions such as calving complications, bloating, fractures, poisoning, and other serious health issues. He added that trained veterinary doctors will reach farmers' locations through mobile units and provide immediate treatment. A total of eight mobile veterinary units are currently functioning across eight taluks.He urged farmers to spread awareness about the service and make full use of it.The ninth phase of the National Livestock Disease Control Programme will be implemented in the district from April 23 to May 22 for a period of one month. The DC emphasized that all cattle and buffaloes must be vaccinated to prevent the spread of FMD, which is a highly contagious disease transmitted through air and direct contact between animals.

He instructed Animal Husbandry Department officials to intensify awareness campaigns through dairies and local communication channels.

Officials said the district has a total of 1,81,676 cattle and buffaloes, and complete vaccination coverage is being targeted.

Culture more important than education, Says Kadakol Seer

KALABURAGI

Stressing the importance of values in modern society, seer of Kadakol Math, Dr. Rudramuni Shivacharya, said that culture and moral values are more important than mere education.

He was speaking while blessing devotees at a Purana programme held in Varavi village of the taluk. "While it is encouraging that today's youth are pursuing higher education, it is unfortunate that they are forgetting religion, culture, and human values," he observed.

The seer emphasized that education without culture is meaningless. He urged youth to preserve traditions, family values, and respect for elders, especially in rural areas, stating that these are the true markers of a fulfilled life.

He further advised youngsters to stay connected with their roots and maintain respectful relationships with elders in their native villages. "One must cultivate the habit of helping saints and the poor. Even an uneducated person with good values is better than an educated person without them," he said.

Expressing concern over the rising trend of bad habits among youth, Dr. Rudramuni Shivacharya warned against alcoholism and other addictions, stating that such habits lead to destruction. "Only by following good values and discipline can one lead a happy life," he added. He also called upon youth to imbibe the teachings of Puranas to build strong character and lead a meaningful life. Several seers and dignitaries were present on the occasion, including Guruling Devaru of Yalgod and Arakeri Paramadeshwar Math, Eranna Mutya of Sathkhed Rajabhag Savar Temple, Satyanand Mutya of Anajagi Brahman Math, Yallappa Mutya of Shakhapur Math, and Rudramuni Beeralinga Devaru of Honagunti Math, along with local leaders and devotees.

Raichur heatwave alert sparks safety measures

RAICHUR

Officials have warned the public to stay careful as the Indian Meteorological Department has predicted extreme heat and possible heatwave conditions in the coming days in the district. District Disaster Management Authority chairman and in-charge Deputy Commissioner Ishwar Kumar Kandu advised people to take safety steps to avoid heat-related health problems. He said people should avoid going out unnecessarily during hot hours and drink plenty of water throughout the day. Authorities have advised people to wear light cotton clothes and avoid outdoor work between 12 noon and 3 pm. They also suggested using hats, umbrellas, sunglasses, and if possible a wet cloth on the head and face while stepping out.

Khandre said Karnataka supports cooperation but opposed Lok Sabha seat increase, alleging unfair tax allocation.

Centre favouring north in tax share, delimitation: Khandre

BIDAR

Karnataka Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre has alleged that the Central Government is showing bias towards North Indian states in matters of tax distribution and Lok Sabha seat allocation.Addressing reporters, he said that while the state is willing to cooperate, there has been no positive response from the other side. He expressed concern over the proposed increase in Lok Sabha seats, claiming that it disproportionately benefits northern states.Khandre stated that southern states contribute significantly more in taxes but receive comparatively less in return. "For every one rupee paid in taxes, we receive only about 15 paise, whereas some northern states receive nearly three times more than what they contribute," he alleged.He further claimed that Karnataka contributes around ₹4.5 lakh crore in taxes but receives only about ₹60,000 crore from the Centre.

Congress gains support as leaders switch party

HANGAL

Former BJP leaders from Shankarikoppa village Malakannavara family members Shivabasappa Malakannavara and former Gram Panchayat member Shambhu Malakannavara joined Congress party on Thursday in presence of MLA Srinivas Mane along with supporters MLA said Congress supports people from all communities and works for welfare schemes through its guarantee programmes He added that the government is solving long pending problems.

Education returns to its true purpose again

PRITHA ROY

Education, which was once considered a powerful tool for shaping character, curiosity, and critical thinking, is increasingly being re-examined as institutions and educators attempt to bring it back to its original purpose.

In recent times, education has largely become focused on marks, rankings, and memorisation, reducing its broader aim of developing responsible and well-rounded individuals. However, a gradual shift is now being observed, with efforts to prioritise understanding over rote learning and skills over scores.In ancient times, particularly during the Vedic period, education followed a holistic approach.

The Gurukul system emphasised discipline, moral values, and life skills along with academic learning. Students lived with their gurus and were trained not only in subjects but also in managing responsibilities, relationships, and practical life situations. The system focused on overall personality development and balance in life.The ancient principle "Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye" highlights that true education is that which leads to liberation and wisdom.In contrast, modern education has often been criticised for focusing mainly on job-oriented learning, leading to stress and a lack of essential life skills among students.

To address this gap, several institutions are revisiting traditional methods by introducing residential learning environments, yoga, meditation, and value-based education.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has further strengthened this direction by promoting experiential and holistic learning.Educators believe that combining traditional values with modern teaching methods can help build a generation that is not only skilled, but also responsible, ethical, and capable of contributing meaningfully to society.

Supporters of Malikayya Guttedar Hit Back at Prakash Jamadar in Afzalpur

AFZALPUR

Supporters of former minister Malikayya Guttedar have strongly reacted to recent remarks made by Guarantee Implementation Committee Chairman Prakash Jamadar, accusing him of indulging in politics by using the name of late Vitthal Herur.

Addressing a press conference in the town, former APMC President Ramanna Nayakodi alleged that Prakash Jamadar has forgotten his own past. He claimed that during elections when Vitthal Herur had contested, Jamadar had "betrayed" him by extending support to M. Y. Patil, a fact that, he said, the Koli community has not forgotten.

He further criticized Jamadar, stating that as a follower of M.Y. Patil, he had failed to deliver justice to the Koli community and was now engaging in politics driven by personal interests without any ideological commitment.

Nayakodi also demanded that Jamadar refrain from making "disparaging remarks" against Malikayya Guttedar, who, he said, had significantly contributed to the development of the constituency.

Speaking on the occasion, leader Devindra Jamadar highlighted that during Guttedar's tenure, several members of the Koli community were appointed to key positions. He cited examples including Jyoti Jamadar and Rukkini Jamadar .

NAME CHANGE

I, **SHAIK MASTAN VALi**, Resident of No.44, Milkman Street, Near Lido Mall Halasuru Bengaluru-560008, have changed my minor son's name from **MOHAMMAD SHAIK SADAN** to **MOHAMMED SHAIK SADAN** vide Affidavit Dated: 16.04.2026 before notary R.BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SYED MUSTAFA IRFAN**, residing at No. 45, Flat No BG2, Koolz Zircon Hill Apt, Church Road, Muddamma Garden, Chinnappa Garden, Adjacent, Bengaluru-560046, have changed my Minor daughter's name from **ZAHRA FAATIMAH** to **ZARA FATHIMA**, vide affidavit dated: 14.04.2026, before Notary N.NAGAPPA, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, THIMMARAJU B M S/o MARIGOWDA, R/o Hallimysore Hobali, HolenarasipuraTalluku, Bantarathalalu, Sravanur R S, Hole Narasipura, Hasan, Karnataka-573211, havechanged my name and shall hereafter be known as THIMMARAJA B M.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MUBEENA TAJ,** Residing at No.114, 14th Cross, Opposite Al Kareem Masjid Fathima Layout, Govindapura, Bengaluru-560045, have changed my name to **MUBEEN TAJ,** vide affidavit dated: 04.04.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **NOOR ASMA ATHAULLA W/o Athaulla Azmathulla**, Residing at No.5, 4th Main Road, Beside Excellent School, Bismillah Nagar Bengaluru-560029 have changed my name to **NOOR ASMA S**, vide affidavit dated: 16.04.2026 before notary R.BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for general information that I, RAVINDRANATH KOTIAN S/o late NARAYANA, R/o 2-43/19, Shri Raksha, Guthige Compound, Derebail, Konchady, Dakshina Kannada, Mangalore, Karnataka-575008, declare that the name of mine and my wife have been wrongly written as RAVINDRANATH and SHOBHA in my PPO No-258981400076. The actual name of mine and my wife is RAVINDRANATH KOTIAN and SHOBHA RAVINDRANATH KOTIAN respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

CHANGE OF NAME

It is for general information that I, G V SREERAMAPPA S/o VENKATARAYAPPA, R/o Gundlapalli, Bagepalli, Chikkaballapur, Karnataka-561207, declare that name of mine and my wife have been wrongly written as SRIRAMAPPA G V and ANITHAMMA in my minor daughter namely SAHANA G S, aged 17 years in her 10th Class educational Documents. The actual name of mine and my wife are G VSREERAMAPPA and ANITHAMMA V respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SIDDALINGAPPA,** Residing at Ganga nilaya 6th sisira cross Manjunath nagar kyathsandra Post Tumkur 572104 karnataka. have changed my name to **SIDDALINGAPPA R.,** vide affidavit dated: 17.04.2026 before notary RAMESH NAIK.C,Tumkur.

NAME CHANGE

I, **JAWEED AHMED AHMED PASHA**, residing at No. 1531, 14th Cross R.K. Hegdenagar, Bangaluru-560077, have changed my name to **JAVEED AHMED**, vide affidavit dated: 10.04.2026, before Notary N.NAGAPPA, Bangalore

NAME CHANGE

I, **SYED FAZLUR REHMAN SYED TAMEEM AHMED**, residing at No. 30, Hutchins Road, Cooke Town, Opp. Omega Residency Appt. Frazer Town Post, Bangalore-560005,have changed my name to **SYED TAMEEM AHMED**, vide affidavit dated: 10.04.2026, before Notary N.NAGAPPA, Bangalore

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No. 1081/2025
Petitioners: **Sri.Hanumanthagowda** S/o Late Muniyappa Aged about 48 years, R/at Kuntanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. V/S
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death, The Tahshildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the Grandfather of petitioner by name LATE HANUMANTHARAYA S/O LATE NANJUNDEGOWDA who died on 03.05.1960 at Kuntanahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 05.05.2026. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 17th day of April 2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministrial Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Advocate, **K.N.Sathish Kumar,** Opp to Court Complex 4th Ward, Rojipura Doddaballapur Town.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No.1080/2025
Petitioners: **Sri.Chandrashekar** S/o Late Ramanjinappa Aged about 45 years, R/at Neraleghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death The Tahshildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14. Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the GrandMother of petitioner by name LATE HANUMAKKA W/O LATE CHANNIGAPPA. who died on 30.12.1998 at Neraleghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 05.05.2026. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 17th day of April 2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministrial Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Advocate, **K.N.Sathish Kumar,** Opp to Court Complex 4th Ward, Rojipura Doddaballapur Town.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No.1077/2025
Petitioners: **Sri.Chandrashekar** S/o Late Ramanjinappa Aged about 45 years, R/at Neraleghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death The Tahshildar, Doddaballapura Taluk, Doddaballapura.
PUBLIC NOTICE
Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14. Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the father of petitioner by name LATE RAMANUJAPPA S/O LATE CHANNIGAPPA. who died on 03.03.1985 at Neraleghatta Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 05.05.2026. In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 17th day of April 2026.
By order of the court
Chief Ministrial Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura
Advocate, **K.N.Sathish Kumar,** Opp to Court Complex 4th Ward, Rojipura Doddaballapur Town.

Elephant's night visit startles Channapatna village residents

CHANNAPATNA

Residents of B V Halli village in Channapatna taluk were shocked after wild elephants entered a house compound during the night. Two elephants were seen near the home of Doddegowda and caused panic among villagers. They reportedly ate bananas and papayas kept in the courtyard before moving back towards the nearby forest. Locals said such incidents are increasing as wild animals come out of the adjacent coconut forest area.

They expressed anger and shared videos of the incident with the forest department seeking immediate action. Officials have been urged to prevent crop damage and ensure safety of homes near forest borders. Villagers said elephants are frequently entering farms and damaging banana and papaya plantations in the region.

The forest department has been informed and asked to take preventive measures to avoid further incidents. Residents requested immediate patrols and monitoring in the area while also demanding long term solutions including barriers and awareness drives to reduce conflict between humans and wild elephants in future safely managed.

ANTI-CORRUPTION MILESTONE

K'taka Lokayukta to mark 40 years

CHITRADURGA

The Karnataka Lokayukta, which has played a major role in fighting corruption and improving governance in the state, has completed four decades of its service. To mark this milestone, a special programme will be held on April 18, 2026, at the Banquet Hall of Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru.The event will be inaugurated by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant as the chief guest, while Supreme Court Judge Arvind Kumar will attend as the guest of honour. The programme will be held in the presence of Karnataka Lokayukta B.S. Patil and Deputy Lokayuktas K.N. Phanindra and B. Veerappa.On this occasion, the Chief Justice will launch the Lokayukta magazine, a new digital portal on the assets and liabilities of elected representatives, and an online investigation module aimed at improving transparency and efficiency.Former Lokayuktas and Deputy Lokayuktas will also be felicitated during the ceremony in recognition of their service.Following the main event, technical seminars will be conducted .

ASSAM BEGINS ARGUMENTS IN ZUBEEN GARG CASE

Government starts detailed legal submissions in ongoing hearing process

GUWAHATI

Advocate General Devajit Saikia on Friday formally opened the Assam government's side of arguments during the charge framing hearing in the ongoing Zubeen Garg death case before a special fast-track court in Guwahati. The proceedings, which have already continued for around fifteen days, are focused on determining whether sufficient material exists to frame charges and proceed to a full trial.

Saikia stated that the government side will require approximately six to seven days to complete its submissions, as the legal team intends to ensure that no loopholes remain in their presentation before the court. He emphasized that the arguments are being carefully structured and will be carried forward collectively by the prosecution team representing the state.

Speaking to reporters after his appearance before the court, Saikia said that he had initiated the arguments on behalf of the Assam government and confirmed that the process would continue in the coming days. His remarks highlighted the procedural stage of the hearing, which is a crucial step in criminal proceedings where the court evaluates the strength of the prosecution's case before deciding whether to formally frame charges against the accused.

The special fast-track court has been hearing detailed submissions from both sides as part of this pre-trial process. Legal experts note that charge framing hearings are significant because they determine the direction of a case, ensuring that only matters with sufficient legal basis proceed further in the judicial system.

In this instance, the government's legal representatives are focusing on presenting a comprehensive argument to support the continuation of the case. The extended duration of submissions reflects the complexity and seriousness with which both sides are approaching the matter.

Saikia reiterated that the state's legal team is committed to completing its arguments without leaving gaps that could be exploited later in the proceedings. The hearing is expected to continue in the coming days as both prosecution and defense advance their respective positions before the court.

Gujarat High Court Rejects Ashram Appeal

AHMEDABAD

Court clears government to reclaim prime Motera land dispute

The Gujarat High Court on Friday dismissed an appeal filed by the Asaram Ashram Trust in a long-standing land dispute in the Motera area of Ahmedabad, paving the way for the state government to take possession of more than 45,000 square metres of valuable land. The ruling upheld earlier orders directing the resumption of the land after finding serious violations of the original allotment conditions.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Sunita Agarwal and Justice D. N. Ray confirmed a previous judgment of a single judge, which had already upheld the Ahmedabad Collector's decision to reclaim the land on the grounds of encroachment and breach of allotment terms. The court observed that the trust had repeatedly violated conditions attached to the original grant and ruled that there was no scope for regularising the illegal occupation.

The land was originally allotted several decades ago for limited religious use, covering approximately 33,980 square metres. However, government authorities submitted that the trust expanded its occupation to nearly 50,000 square metres over time. To support its claims, the state relied on GPS-based measurements and satellite imagery, which indicated that the encroachment extended onto adjoining government land as well as portions of the Sabarmati riverbed.

In its observations, the bench stated that the petitioner had engaged in persistent violations and clearly held that no equitable relief could be granted in such circumstances. The court also emphasized that riverbed land cannot be regularised under any legal framework, reinforcing the protected status of such public land.

Government pleader G. H. Virk, appearing for the state, informed the court that the reclamation process had followed due procedure, including multiple notices, inspections, and more than twenty hearings. He further argued that applications submitted by the trust seeking regularisation effectively amounted to an admission of unlawful occupation. He also indicated that fresh proceedings under Section 202 of the Land Revenue Code would be initiated, accompanied by a new notice for eviction and possession recovery.

The trust had requested a four-week stay on the order to approach the Supreme Court. However, the bench noted that any interim relief would require a formal undertaking to vacate the land, which was not granted. The court therefore refused to stay its order after the state assured further statutory action to secure possession.

The disputed land lies adjacent to the Narendra Modi Stadium and the Sardar Patel Sports Complex, an area earmarked for major sports infrastructure development. Authorities have linked the site to broader urban planning initiatives, including preparations connected to a potential 2030 Commonwealth Games bid and long-term Olympic infrastructure goals. With the appeal dismissed, the state government is expected to proceed with reclaiming the land in accordance with legal procedures.

India steps up action against Golden Crescent drug smuggling networks

NEW DELHI

Indian security agencies are focusing heavily on narcotics smuggling networks originating from the Golden Crescent region of Pakistan-Afghanistan, officials said. Intelligence inputs indicate a significant rise in drug trafficking from the region, which is believed to account for around 65 per cent of narcotics entering India, while the rest comes via the Golden Triangle covering Myanmar, Laos and Thailand. Officials said Pakistan-based networks are increasingly pushing drugs into southern states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu, with further movement towards Gujarat, Maharashtra, and neighbouring countries including Maldives and Sri Lanka. A high-level meeting between the Narcotics Control Bureau, NTRO and Indian Navy has decided to intensify surveillance of sea routes and container shipments. Authorities are also coordinating with international agencies. Officials added that a national roadmap has been prepared to make India drug-free through sustained, multi-agency action and tighter enforcement.

Pradhan Accuses Patnaik of Misleading Odisha Over Delimitation Bill Debate

BHUBANESWAR

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Friday accused Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president and former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik of attempting to mislead and create fear among the people of Odisha amid the ongoing debate over the proposed delimitation legislation. The sharp exchange has intensified political tensions in the state, with both sides trading strong remarks over the interpretation and implications of the proposal.

According to Pradhan, Patnaik recently wrote to all 31 Members of Parliament from Odisha, urging them to unite in opposing what he termed a threat to the state's political and economic interests. In his letter, Patnaik reportedly expressed concern that the proposed changes could weaken Odisha's voice in national decision-making and impact its developmental priorities.

The controversy revolves around discussions on the 131st Constitutional Amendment Bill, linked to the broader process of delimitation. Delimitation involves redrawing electoral constituency boundaries based on population changes, potentially affecting the distribution of parliamentary seats.

Rejecting Patnaik's claims, Pradhan described them as politically motivated and labelled the letter as fear-mongering. He asserted that the concerns raised were baseless and could unnecessarily alarm citizens while distorting facts about the legislative process and its intended purpose.

Man arrested in Ahmedabad for threatening Bihar CM

AHMEDABAD

Police in Ahmedabad district of Gujarat have arrested a man for allegedly issuing death threats to Samrat Choudhary, a day before he was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Bihar, officials said on Friday. The accused has been identified as Shekhar Yadav (32), a resident of Sanand taluka in Ahmedabad and originally from Banka district in Bihar. He was arrested on Thursday in connection with the case. According to Ahmedabad Rural Superintendent of Police (SP) Om Prakash Jat, the accused allegedly called Samrat Choudhary's office last Tuesday, a day before the oath-taking ceremony, and issued death threats. Police are investigating the matter further. Police said further legal proceedings are underway and security arrangements are being reviewed by officials.

RAHUL ATTACKS CENTRE OVER WOMEN'S RESERVATION BILL AND DELIMITATION CONCERNS

NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Friday, during a debate on three bills, accused the Centre of pushing its political agenda under the guise of the women's reservation legislation, calling it a façade unrelated to women's empowerment. He said the existing 2023 Women's Reservation Bill should be brought back and the opposition would support it. Gandhi alleged that the government was using the quota issue to sideline demands for a caste census and weaken representation of OBCs and marginalised communities. He further claimed that delimitation could reduce southern states' representation and accused the BJP of reshaping the electoral map to retain power, citing changes already seen in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. Calling the move an "anti-national act", he urged equitable representation for Dalits and OBCs across institutions including bureaucracy, judiciary, and corporate India.

ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ
ಆಸ್ತಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಛೇರಿ ವಿ.ಸಿ ಫಾರಂ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ–571405. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ
ಇ ಮೇಲ್:eousmandya@mail.com

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕೃ.ವಿ.ವಿ.ಮ/ಅ.ಅ/ಟೆಂಡರ್/228/2026–27 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17.04.2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: NO.EO/TN/MP Hostel/18/2026-27 Dtd.15.04.2026)
(ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮಾತ್ರ)

ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ ಮಂಡ್ಯದ ಅಧೀನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳಲ್ಲಿನ ವಸತಿ ನಿಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲಸ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಲು ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೇಮಕ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಅಲ್ಪಾವದಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನೋಟಿಫಿಕೇಷನ್, ಷೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ವಿವರಗಳು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ವೆಬ್ ಸೈಟ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಲಭ್ಯವಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಷೆಡ್ಯೂಲ್ ದಿನಾಂಕಗಳು ಈ ಕೆಳಕಂಡತಿವೆ.

1	ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ	12.05.2026	ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
2	ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ	14.05.2026	ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 10.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
3	ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಮತ್ತು ಸಮಯ	15.05.2026	ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 10.30 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ

ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕೆಳಸಹಿದಾರರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ಕೆಲಸದ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಕೆಲಸದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ದಿವಸಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಮತ್ತು ಆಸ್ತಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ, ವಿ.ಸಿ.ಫಾರಂ,ಮಂಡ್ಯ–571405 ಇವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 9448196321.

ಸಹಿ/–ಆಸ್ತಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು
ಕೃಷಿ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಗಳ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಮಂಡ್ಯ/53/ಕಿರಡಿ ಸಾಯಿ/2026–27

Government of Karnataka Zilla Panchayath, Chitradurga
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Chitradurga-577501
Email : zped.cta@gmail.com Office phone no: 08194-222372
No:EE/PRED/CTA/TEND/TECH//2025-26/113 Date:17.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Executive Engineer, Pachayath Raj Engineering Division, chitradurga has invites works tender under Standard tender document under various head of account grant for 12 works (Indent No: 25893,25080, 25081, 25289, 25113, 25768, 25662, 25663, 25814, 26000/call2, 25695, 25967) for the Estimated Cost Minimum Rs.10.00 lakhs Maximum 200.00 lakhs Total Rs:1340.00 Lakhs. Further information obtained from the office during the office hours or any quarries contact (support@eprochelpdesk.com) or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: tel: 09240214000, or 09240214000 this office Telephone no. 08194-222372 at office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division,Chitradurga as dates below:-

(1) Pre Bid meeting date and time Date : 27.04.2026 ರ : ಸಮಯ:11.00 **(2)** Last Date for information any quarries Date : 29.04.2026 ರ : ಸಮಯ: 11.00 **(3)** Last Date for Submitting the tender Date : 30.04.2026ರ : ಸಮಯ: 16.00 **(4)** Last Date of Opening the Technical Bid Date : 02.05.2026ರ : ಸಮಯ: 16.01 **(5)** Last Date of Opening the Financial Bid Date : 03.05.2026ರ : ಸಮಯ: 16.02

Further any quarries for tender contact (support@eprochelpdesk.com) or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: tel: 09240214000, or 09240214000 or this Phone no.08194-222372 or Executive Engineer, P.R.E.Division, Chitradurga in office hours.

RO.No.44:DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer
P.R.E. Division, Chitradurga

HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA
Bengaluru-560001
No. HCRB/CJR-9/2026 Date: 16.04.2026

BRIEF NOTIFICATION

Online applications are invited by High Court of Karnataka for filling up of 90 posts of Civil Judges by Direct Recruitment in Karnataka Judicial Services. Pay scale of the said post is Rs.77,840 - Rs.1,36,520. Last date for submission of online application is **15.05.2026 till 11.59 p.m.** Eligible candidates can apply 'Online' only through the High Court of Karnataka website i.e., **https://judiciary.karnataka.gov.in** No other means / mode of applications will be accepted. The Notification and other details are available in the above mentioned portal and in the official Gazette (E-Gazette) of Karnataka. Before submitting the online application, the candidates shall go through the instructions available in the Official website of High Court of Karnataka.

Sd/- (K.S. BHARATH KUMAR)
REGISTRAR GENERAL AND SECRETARY,
CIVIL JUDGES RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE.
HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA, BENGALURU.

DIPR/CP/222/Zen/2026-27

Government of Karnataka - Karnataka Forest Department
Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Hosanagara Sub Division, Hosanagara.
District: Shivamogga, Taluk: Hosanagara,
e-Mail ID: acfhnr@gmail.com
No: ACF/HNR/CAMPA& NBM/CR-1/26-27/5 Date: 16.04.2026

Detailed e-Tender Notice.
(e-Tender Notice Through e-Procurement Portal)

Unitwar Short-Term Tender is invited in two cover system through e-procurement portal from interested Forest Contractors having experience for implementation of Advance works towards formation of plantation and maintenance and maintenance of saplings under CAMPA Scheme 1 Indent (Call-2) of Approx. total Rs. 5.96 lakhs and 14 works (Call-2) under NBM Scheme of Approx. total Rs. 62.20 lakhs in various places in the limits of various forest zones of Sagar Division for the year 2026-27. Last date for submission of Tender is fixed as: 23.04.2026 up to 5.20 PM. Complete details of works and places are explained in the e-Procurement Portal. For further information this office can be contacted and details regarding the Tender can be obtained from the official website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/- Assistant Conservator of Forests,
Hosanagara Sub Division, Hosanagara.

DIPR/smg/ksmca/26-27/90/04/97

BENGALURU SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT LIMITED
Office of the Deputy General Manager-1, 1st Floor, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanth Nagar, Bengaluru-560052.
No. DGM-1/BSWML/Tend-1/2026-27 Date: 16.04.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)- Call-3 (Through GOK KPPP only)

The Deputy General Manager-1, Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited on behalf of the Managing Director, BSWML, Bengaluru invites tenders from Waste pickers/ Self Help Groups/ Non-Government Organisations/C&T Contractors for the operation and maintenance of Dry Waste Collection Centres for a period of 5 years. The interested tenderers may submit tenders through KPP portal of the Government of Karnataka **viz. https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** The tenderers are advised to note the minimum qualification criteria specified in the bid document. For other details refer bid document.

Calendar of Events: (1) Last date to upload pre-bid queries: **21.04.2026 upto 17.30 Hrs. in KPP Portal. (2)** Pre bid meeting: **22.04.2026 at 12.00 Hrs** at the office of CE & CGM (Tech), BSWML, Thimmaiah Road, Vasanthnagar, Bangalore. **(3)** Last date for submission of the bids: **27.04.2026 upto 16.00 Hrs. (4)** Date of opening of bid on : **28.04.2026 at 16.30 Hrs.**

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager-1, BSWML.

DIPR/CP/225/SSC/2026-27

GOVT OF KARNATAKA
KALYAN KARNATAKA REGION DEVELOPMENT BOARD, KALABURAGI
Opp Aiwan-e-Shahi, PDA ENGINEERING COLLEGE ROAD, KALABURAGI - 585102
No. KKRDB/ACC/AS-2/33/2025-26/504 Date:17.04.2026

INVESTMENT OF KKRDB SURPLUS FUND THROUGH e-AUCTION AT e-PORTAL OF GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA

KKRDB invites Quotes for Interest rates from the eligible Regional /Zonal/Head office of Nationalized Public sector Banks/Regional Rural Banks/Private Scheduled Commercial Banks in India for investment of surplus fund by way of Fixed deposit for 365 days as per the Government of Karnataka Circular No.FD 91 TAR 2022, Bangalore, Dated :02.07.2022 and with relevant addendums/Circulars.

Approximate available surpluses fund as on date is Rs.20.00 crores

1) Interested bidders can access documents from www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in from Date: 17.04.2026 onwards by paying an application fee as per e-Procurement Portal. No individual Bank branch shall participate in e-Auction.
2) Corrigendum / Addendum/Modifications /Corrections, if any will be published in Website e-procurements Portal only.

Schedule of Various Events for Tender (e-Auction) is as below:

Sr.No. Particulars: 1) Date of publishing the RFP Document :17.04.2026, 2) Last Date and Time for Submitting queries : 23.04.2026 up to 01.30 pm, 3) Date and Time of Pre-Auction Meeting : 24.04.2026 at 10.30 am, 4) Last date and time for submission of Participation : 02.05.2026 up to 05.00 pm, 5) Date and time of Evaluation : 04.05.2026 at 10.30 am, 6) Live E-Auction/E-Bidding : 08.05.2026 from 10.30 am to 01.30 pm, 7) Delta Time : 15 Minutes

DIPR/Kalaburagi/44/Deshpande Publicity/2026-27

Sd/- **Deputy Secretary**
KKRDB, Kalaburagi

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
OFFICE OF CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, TALUK GENERAL HOSPITAL GUNDLUPETE
GUNDLUPETE TALUK, CHAMARAJANAGARA DISTRICT
PH.NO: 08229-222205 E-MAIL: tlhgundlupet@gmail.com
NO/TH/GPET/OUTSOURCE/01/2026-27 DATE: 08.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(e-Procurement Portal – kpp.karnataka.gov.in)

It is intended to obtain manpower services through outsourcing for 24 Group D, 01 Laboratory Technician, 01 Data Entry Operator and 04 Sweepers/Gardeners posts for the period 2026-27 from the date of work order to 31.03.2027 for the Taluk General Hospital & Mother and Child Hospital Gundlupet, Chamarajanagara district. Tenders are invited through e-procurement portal in two-cover system from Karnataka Public Service providers register under the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act 1999 and Rules 2000. The tender details are as follows:

Tender Reference No. & Date:	No: TH/GPET/OUTSOURCE/01/2026-27 Date: 08.04.2026
A. Estimated Value of Tender Service:	Rs. 62,99,434/- (Sixty Two Lakh Ninety Nine Thousand Four Hundred and Thirty Four Rupees only)
B. E.M.D Amount Payable by Tender @ 2%:	Rs. 1,25,989/- (One Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Nine Rupees only)
Tender Upload Start Date:	13.04.2026
Tender Upload End Date:	27.04.2026 (Evening 4.00 PM)
Technical Bid Opening Date:	29.04.2026 (Morning 11:00 AM)
Financial Bid Opening Date:	06.05.2026 (Morning 11:00 AM)
Address of Authority Inviting Tender:	Taluk General Hospital Gundlupet, Chamarajanagara District – 571111 Email: tlhgundlupet@gmail.com Phone: 08229-222205

Further details can be obtained by visiting this office during working days.

Sd/-
Administrative Medical Officer
Taluk General Hospital Gundlupet

No: DHO/CHAMARAJANAGARA/47: 2026-27

QUICK READ

TCS Nashik Case: Probe Points to Organised Harassment Module

Kolkata

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Friday said preliminary findings in the Nashik TCS case indicate that allegations of sexual harassment and religious coercion are "extremely serious" and part of an organised module rather than isolated incidents. Speaking during his visit to Kolkata, Fadnavis noted that Tata Consultancy Services has taken a proactive role, cooperating fully with investigators and refusing to shield the accused. Multiple FIRs filed by female employees detail harassment, stalking, and mental torture between 2022 and March 2026. He added that central agencies have been alerted and may assist if required. Police are analysing CCTV footage and digital records, while a Special Investigation Team probes the organised nature of the case. Several accused, including senior staff and an HR official, have been arrested.

CM Dhami conducts surprise inspection after CM Helpline complaint

Dehradun

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Friday conducted a surprise on-site inspection in Jakhan area of Rajpur Road after a complaint on the CM Helpline regarding damaged infrastructure. The complaint, filed by local resident Vivek Madan, alleged that a footpath was dug up during underground cabling work by the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited and was not properly restored, leaving uneven tiles and unsafe conditions for pedestrians. Instead of reviewing the matter in office, the Chief Minister visited the site, walked along the stretch with the complainant, and assessed the damage. He also made a video call to concerned officials, expressing displeasure over negligence and poor coordination. Dhami directed officials to ensure timely restoration and warned against repeated digging and wastage of public funds.

TOP LEADERS SET TO VOTE IN GUJARAT POLLS

High-profile participation expected in major local elections across Gujarat state

AHMEDABAD

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are expected to visit Ahmedabad on April 26 to cast their votes in the upcoming local self-government elections in Gujarat, signalling the significance of the electoral exercise.

According to official sources, the Prime Minister is likely to vote at a polling booth set up at Nishan School in the Ranip area of the city. Meanwhile, Amit Shah is expected to cast his vote at a separate polling station within Ahmedabad. Their participation highlights the importance attached to this round of elections, which is among the largest local electoral events held in the state in recent years.

The elections will span multiple tiers of governance, including municipal corporations, municipalities, and panchayati raj institutions. Former Chief Minister and current Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel is expected to vote from the Thaltej area of Ahmedabad, while Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel is likely to cast his vote

in Navsari.

Polling across Gujarat is scheduled to take place from 7 A.M. to 6 P.M., with Electronic Voting Machines being used at nearly 50,000 polling stations. The counting of votes is set for April 28. The elections will cover 15 municipal corporations, 84 municipalities, 34 district panchayats, and 260 taluka panchayats, with over 10,000 seats at stake.

Authorities estimate that more than 4.19 crore voters will participate in this extensive democratic exercise. The electoral contest is expected to be competitive, with major political parties such as the Bharatiya Janata Party, Congress, Aam Aadmi Party, and several independent candidates fielding contenders across constituencies.

More than 20,000 candidates remain in the fray following withdrawals, although a number of candidates have already secured victory unopposed. This election cycle is particularly significant as it marks the first implementation of a 27 percent reservation for Other Backward Classes, in addition to existing quotas for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and women. These changes are expected to influence the structure of local governance bodies. As polling day approaches, campaigning has intensified across the state, with political parties refining their outreach strategies to connect with voters.

Hakim Slams BJP over Political Narrative Shift

KOLKATA

West Bengal Minister and Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim on Friday launched a strong attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), alleging that electoral politics in India has shifted away from ideological debates toward misinformation, social media manipulation, and pressure from investigative agencies. At the same time, he defended his party's governance record and development initiatives.

Hakim said that in earlier years, elections—particularly during the rule of the Left Front—were fought as clear political contests. However, he claimed that the nature of competition has changed significantly in recent times. According to him, battles against the BJP are no longer purely political but are influenced by misleading online content and personal attacks.

Taking a sharp swipe at the BJP, Hakim asserted that the

Mayor accuses BJP of misinformation, polarization, and defends governance and development record strongly

party would not come to power in West Bengal. He also raised concerns over alleged incidents related to food choices in BJP-ruled states, claiming that certain ideologies discourage non-vegetarian practices. He challenged BJP leaders to share a meal with him, questioning whether they would accept diverse food habits.

Hakim further accused the BJP of attempting to polarize voters using religious narratives. Referring to controversies involving former legislator Humayun Kabir, he said his party had taken disciplinary action, emphasizing that the issue was about political conduct rather than religion. He rejected accusations that his party engages in appeasement, instead highlighting its focus on social welfare and upliftment.

On constitutional values, Hakim stressed that rights are granted by the Constitution and cannot be taken away arbitrarily. He argued that secularism goes beyond minority-majority divides and warned that politicizing religion undermines democratic principles.

Criticizing the approach of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on reforms such as the Uniform Civil Code, Hakim said that major legal changes require consultation and parliamentary process, not unilateral decisions.

He also addressed language politics, stating that Urdu is an Indian language and should not be associated with any single religion. On governance, he highlighted infrastructure growth, welfare schemes, and job creation under the Trinamool Congress government.

Responding to allegations of electoral malpractice, Hakim insisted that his party relies on public support rather than coercion. He also questioned the Centre's handling of border security, indirectly targeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah over concerns about illegal infiltration.

Expressing confidence in the party's future, Hakim said that voters would ultimately judge based on development work rather than propaganda, urging that elections remain focused on governance and constitutional values.

ED CONDUCTS FRESH SEARCHES IN MONEY LAUNDERING PROBE LINKED TO ASHOK KHARAT

NASHIK

A fresh round of search operations was carried out on Friday by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a money laundering investigation involving self-styled godman Ashok Kharat. The case also includes serious allegations of sexual exploitation and financial fraud carried out under the guise of spiritual activities.

Officials stated that the latest searches targeted commercial premises linked to Kharat, including the Oaks Property Office located in the Canada Corner area of Nashik. The location, identified as Canada Corner, has been under scrutiny since earlier enforcement actions in the case.

According to agency sources, the premises had already been sealed on March 26 following extensive raids conducted by a Special Investigation Team (SIT). The SIT had previously uncovered significant material believed to be relevant to ongoing investigations, prompting further coordinated action between the enforcement agency and local authorities.

The Enforcement Directorate official confirmed that the searches are part of an ongoing probe into suspected financial irregularities, including alleged benami property transactions, undisclosed assets, and complex financial arrangements linked to Kharat and his associates. Officials added that access to the sealed premises was secured in coordination with the SIT to continue evidence collection.

Earlier investigations had resulted in the seizure of multiple incriminating documents. Authorities reportedly recovered two sacks filled with papers related to property dealings, land transactions, and financial records. These documents included details of more than fifty-two land entries, suspected benami holdings, cheque books, receipts, and financial registers that may indicate large-scale irregular transactions.

Electronic devices were also seized during earlier operations, including computers, hard drives, and pen drives. These digital materials are now being analyzed to trace financial flows and identify potential links between individuals connected to the alleged network.

In previous enforcement actions, officials had also seized cash amounting to forty-two lakh rupees and frozen assets valued at approximately two crore forty lakh rupees. These steps were taken as part of efforts to prevent the suspected dissipation of proceeds of crime during the investigation.

Crime Branch arrests two in South Delhi MDMA trafficking operation

Delhi Police Bust MDMA Supply Network

NEW DELHI

Police in New Delhi have dismantled an organised MDMA supply module operating in South Delhi following a targeted operation conducted by the Crime Branch. Two individuals were arrested and a commercial quantity of narcotics was seized, officials said. The recovery included 19.15 grams of MDMA consisting of 29 Ecstasy tablets and crystalline substances, indicating an active distribution chain.

According to police officials, the operation was executed on the intervening night of April 12 and 13 in the Hargovind Enclave area of Chhattarpur. A taxi was intercepted during the raid, leading to the arrest of Deepak Kumar, aged 37, a resident of Govindpuri in Kalkaji. Search of the vehicle resulted in the recovery of 25 Ecstasy pills and 14.95 grams of MDMA crystals, confirming possession of a commercial quantity.

During interrogation and technical analysis, Deepak Kumar disclosed that he was working as a carrier for a larger supplier network. Acting on this input, the Crime Branch quickly identified and apprehended Md Farhan alias Sunny, aged 33, a resident of Pariyavaran Complex in Saket, before he could evade arrest.

Investigators stated that both accused operated in a highly secretive manner, frequently changing mobile phones, SIM cards, and locations to avoid detection. Farhan allegedly ran a delivery-based drug distribution

system, using his personal vehicle as a cab during the day and for narcotics delivery at night, concealing drugs in packaged food items to evade suspicion.

It was further revealed that he was sourcing MDMA from a foreign national who has been identified, and efforts are underway to trace and arrest the individual involved. During a search of Farhan's rented accommodation in Saket, an additional 4.2 grams of MDMA were recovered, bringing the total seizure to 19.15 grams, along with mobile phones and a vehicle used for coordination.

A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act at the Crime Branch police station. Officials said further investigation is underway to uncover the wider network, financial transactions, and additional members involved in the trafficking operation, with more arrests expected in the coming days. Police also noted that Deepak Kumar had prior involvement in a robbery case registered at Kalkaji police station and had entered the drug trade due to financial difficulties.

ALTUM CREDO HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LTD
Regd. Office: Floor No. 7, Kalpataru Infinia, Wakdewadi, Shivajinagar, Pune - 411005. Maharashtra (India)

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitization And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, read with Rule 3(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. The undersigned is the authorized officer of **Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)**.Under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (The said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, the authorized officer has issued demand notices under 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the borrower(s) [The "said borrower(s)"], to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective demand notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, notice is hereby given, once again, to the said borrower(s) to pay to **Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)**, within sixty days from the publication of this notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said demand notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said borrower(s). As Security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to **Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)** by the said borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) Loan Account Number
1. C K Veeresha (Applicant), **2. H Pavithra** (Co-Applicant), **LAN: CUS030564 & 1192040100103**
Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA Date
09.03.2026 / Rs. 7,63,179/- (Rupees Seven Lakhs Sixty Three Thousand One Hundred Seventy Nine Only) as on **04.03.2026 (NPA) on 28.02.2026**
Description Of Secured Assets (Immovable Property)
Property No. 76, E Swathu No. 151200601900100032 measuring 9.144 X 13.716000000000001 Mts i.e 125.42 Sq Mts, Situated at Guddadalinganahalli Village, Devikere Gram panchayath Jagalur Tq Davangere Dist. **East:** Road, **West:** Vacant Property, **North:** Vacant Property, **South:** Land
Name of the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) Loan Account Number
1. Suresha Naik B (Applicant), **2. Basyanayka H** (Co-Applicant), **LAN: CUST0022742 & S119202000164**
Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA Date
09.03.2026 / Rs. 9,50,936/- (Rupees Nine Lakhs Fifty Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Six Only) as on **04.03.2026 (NPA) on 28.02.2026**
Description Of Secured Assets (Immovable Property)
All that pie of honnalli Taluk Davangere District and parcel of land and building (if any) measuring an extent of 85.28 sq. mtr. Comprised in property no (5) 209/177 bearing PID No-151200500300400095, **East:** Property of Pomya Naik, **West:** Propert of Krishna Naik, **North:** Gram Panchayat Road, **South:** Gram Panchayat Road.
Name of the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) Loan Account Number
1. Vishwanatha G S (Applicant), **2. Sarojamma N** (Co-Applicant), **3. Sudeep G S** (Co-Applicant) **4. Durugamma** (Co-Applicant) **LAN: CUS036004 & S119209000021 & 1192020100280**
Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA Date
17.02.2026 / Rs. 14,48,545/- (Rupees Fourteen Lakhs Forty Eight Thousand Five Hundred Forty Five Only) as on **10.02.2026 (NPA) on 29.01.2026**
Description Of Secured Assets (Immovable Property)
E swathu No. 151200300700120677, Property No. 704 Kokkanur Village, Kokkanur Gram Panchayat, Harihar Taluk, Davangree District - 577530., **East:** Property of Murtheppanavar, **West:** Road, **North:** Road, **South:** Conservancy passage

Place : Davangere, Karnataka
Date : 18.04.2026

Sd/-
Authorized Officer
Altum Credo Home Finance Pvt. Ltd. (ACHFL)

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
3rd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bengaluru - 560009.

Tender Notification
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal only)

Notification No: CE/KHB/2026-27/SE0379 **Date: 16.04.2026**

Karnataka Housing Board has invited tender through KPP Portal for appointment of Architectural Engineering Firm (AEF) for the work of Construction of Residential Quarters for Deputy Commissioner, Bengaluru Rural at Sy No.138, Kundana Village, Kundana Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District

Last date for submission of bid is on 30.04.2026 upto 4.00 PM.

For further information, contact below mentioned office address: Executive Engineer, Karnataka Housing Board, Cauvery Bhavan, Bengaluru. Telephone No: 080-22273511/080-22100077, Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

DIPR/CP/233/AKAR/2026-27

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Karnataka Housing Board, Bengaluru

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Bengaluru Division, 2nd Floor, PWD Annexure Building, K.R. Circle, Bengaluru-01, Phone: 080-22133370

No. 02/2026-27 Date:17.04.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Item-rate tenders, for the work in PWD, **Devanahalli Sub-Division** under this office noted below, are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka in accordance with Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 2000 and as per Standard Tender Documents for procurement of works from the contractors registered in K.P.W.D. as per KPPP. Tender Notification is Published for **01 work (Rs.79.90 Lakhs)** Details of the tender works can be obtained from the above Office during office hours on working days. **EMD & Tender processing fees are mentioned in KPP Portal http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

(1) Tenders must be submitted online through KPP Portal **on or before 4.00 P.M. on: 02.05.2026 (2)** The opening of tenders through KPP Portal on: **04.05.2026 at 4.30 P.M.** or further date and time will be intimated.

For more details contact this office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
DIPR/DD-C.P/229/KSMCA/2026-27

PROFESSORS MISCONDUCT DISMISSAL

Three Himachal Professors Dismissed After Harassment Inquiry Findings

SHIMLA

The Himachal Pradesh Education Department has dismissed three assistant professors from service after a departmental inquiry found them guilty of sexually harassing female students, officials confirmed. The action follows a thorough investigation that established serious misconduct and abuse of authority by the accused.

The dismissed teachers have been identified as Virender Sharma, an Assistant Professor of Mathematics; Anil Kumar, an Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Siddharth Government College in Hamirpur; and Pawan Kumar, a Professor of Dance specializing in Kathak at Jawaharlal Nehru Government College of Fine Arts in Shimla.

The dismissal order, issued on April 16 by Education Secretary Rakesh Kanwar, stated that the charges of grave moral misconduct and professional violations against the accused had been substantiated. It emphasized that the relationship between teachers and students is rooted in trust, dignity, and the assurance of a safe and respectful academic environment. Acts of such nature, the order noted, undermine this foundation, weaken institutional discipline,

and erode public confidence in the education system.

Officials said that the explanations submitted by the accused during the inquiry process failed to counter the evidence presented and did not reduce the seriousness of the misconduct established.

The investigation revealed that Virender Sharma, who was posted at Rajiv Gandhi Government Degree College in Chaura Maidan at the time, behaved inappropriately with a second-year science student on December 1, 2021. He allegedly attempted to establish personal contact with the student and summoned her to his residence, where he tried to assault her. The student resisted and managed to escape safely.

In another case, Anil Kumar, posted at Siddharth Government College in Nadaun, was found guilty of molesting and harassing a first-year science student during a chemistry practical class on November 14, 2024. The inquiry found that he repeatedly touched the student inappropriately and later absconded in an attempt to evade the investigation.

In the third case, Pawan Kumar was found to have misused his official position by summoning female students to his residence late at night for dance practice and forcing some to stay overnight. On January 22, 2024, he allegedly attempted to molest a student and later tried to cover up the incident. The investigation also revealed that his wife attempted to pressure the complainant's family.

Additional allegations against him, including unauthorized visits with students, arbitrary grading practices, and failure to maintain proper attendance records, were also proven during the inquiry.

Officials confirmed that all three professors have been dismissed from service with immediate effect.

Trump praises Taranjit Singh Sandhu on Delhi LG appointment

US President Donald Trump praised Delhi's new Lieutenant Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu, highlighting his commitment to India-US relations.

WASHINGTON

United States President Donald Trump has offered high praise for Taranjit Singh Sandhu, the newly appointed Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. In a message shared by the US Embassy, Trump highlighted Sandhu's "deep commitment" to the partnership between India and the United States, marking a significant nod from Washington toward Delhi's local leadership.

Writing on his Truth Social platform, Trump congratulated the former diplomat on his new role. He noted that as a seasoned official and former Indian Ambassador to the US, Sandhu's experience would be vital in "leading Delhi's progress." Trump expressed confidence that the 63-year-old leader would continue to foster global connections while managing the capital's affairs.

Sandhu is widely respected for his time as India's Ambassador in Washington from 2020 to 2024. During those years, he was a key figure in deepening strategic bonds between the two nations. His career also includes important work at the United Nations in New York, making him one of India's most experienced voices in international relations.

After a long career in the foreign service, Sandhu entered politics and joined the Bharatiya Janata Party. Although he did not win a seat in the 2024 elections, his appointment as Lieutenant Governor allows him to bring his "solution-oriented" style to the city's governance. Sandhu has already called for political unity to help solve the daily challenges facing Delhi's residents, promising a fresh start for the historic national capital.

Lee's approval dips slightly amid economic concerns

SEOUL

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung's approval rating has slipped for the first time in three weeks, falling slightly to 66 percent. While the drop is only one percentage point, a new Gallup Korea poll released highlights growing public debate over the nation's economic health and welfare spending.

Despite the minor dip, Lee maintains a strong lead. Supporters praised his handling of the economy and his diplomatic efforts. However, 26 percent of respondents now view his performance negatively. These critics voiced concerns about the rising exchange rate and what some described as "excessive" welfare policies. Meanwhile, support for the ruling Democratic Party remains steady at 48 percent, its highest level since the administration began.

President Lee Jae-myung's approval rating dipped to 66 percent as critics questioned welfare spending, while he shifts focus to securing vital energy trade routes with Europe.

On the global stage, President Lee is turning his attention to international security. Later, he will join a high-level virtual meeting hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer. The talks focus on protecting the Strait of Hormuz, a vital shipping route for South Korea's energy supplies.

The President plans to deliver a message emphasizing the need for global solidarity to keep trade routes safe. Officials say the Strait is "vital to national interests," especially as tensions in the Middle East threaten global oil prices. Notably, the United States is not expected to attend this specific gathering, placing a spotlight on South Korea's cooperation with European allies to secure safe passage through the crucial waterway.

India and Cyprus strengthen ties in Nicosia

NICOSIA

India and Cyprus have taken another significant step toward deeper friendship following a high-level meeting in Nicosia. India's High Commissioner, Manish, met with the Cypriot Minister of Justice, Costas Fytiris, to discuss essential legal and consular cooperation between the two nations. The talks covered a wide range of practical issues, including the exchange of prisoners, extradition processes, and criminal justice matters. Both officials focused on improving the lives of Indian nationals living in Cyprus by streamlining consular services. This meeting serves as a foundation for the upcoming official visit of Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides to India, scheduled for May 2026. This diplomatic momentum follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's landmark visit to Cyprus last year. The two countries are currently working under a "Joint Action Plan" that spans from 2025 to 2029. This ambitious roadmap aims to boost partnership in modern sectors like digital technology, renewable energy, and defense. Beyond politics, both sides expressed a strong desire to bring their people closer together through new academic and cultural exchange programs.

Police are investigating multiple violent crimes across Australia, including a stabbing in Kingsgrove and targeted attacks in Melbourne.

Police probe violent stabbings across Southwest Sydney

SYDNEY

Police in New South Wales have launched a major investigation after a 44-year-old man was hospitalized following a late-night stabbing in Kingsgrove. The attack occurred when the victim stopped his vehicle and was approached by two unknown men. The assailants stabbed the man in the shoulder before fleeing the scene on motorcycles. He is currently in stable condition.

This latest violence comes as authorities crack down on a string of recent weapon-related crimes. Police arrested a 15-year-old boy in connection with a separate machete attack that took place on a Sydney light rail service. In that incident, a teenage victim was slashed in the arm while riding public transport. The arrested teen now faces serious charges, including wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, while officers continue to hunt for a second suspect.

The spike in knife crime has put the community on edge. Just two months ago, a similar random attack in western Sydney's Merrylands suburb left one person dead and two others fighting for their lives. In that case, a man reportedly stabbed multiple people on a busy main street in broad daylight before being captured by police nearby.

Local detectives are urging anyone with information or dashcam footage of the Kingsgrove motorcycle getaway to come forward. As investigations into these separate incidents continue, NSW Police have increased patrols to reassure the public and curb the recent rise in suburban violence.

MELBOURNE ATTACKS SPARK POLICE ALERT ACROSS CITY

MELBOURNE: Police in Melbourne have warned residents to stay alert after a series of arson attacks and a drive by shooting targeted hospitality venues across the city. Authorities said five fires and one shooting have taken place, raising concern about public safety. Two incidents happened in the central business district, while others struck inner southern suburbs. Early Friday morning, a shot was fired from a moving vehicle at a city venue. No injuries were reported. Police believe the cases may be linked and are investigating possible motives. In separate incidents, a man in Queensland was shot by police after a knife confrontation, while another shooting and robbery in New South Wales left one man injured. Investigators continue to patrol affected areas and increase security presence, asking businesses to review safety measures and report suspicious behavior immediately.

Armed group strikes military camp and highway

QUETTA

The Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) has claimed responsibility for a series of violent attacks against military targets and infrastructure across the province. According to statements released, their fighters recently targeted a Pakistani military camp in the Jhao area and established a temporary blockade on a major highway.

The assault on the Kohadu camp reportedly began on April 12. A spokesperson for the group, Major Gwahram Baloch, stated that the operation started with a sniper strike on a guard before escalating into a full-scale attack. Fighters allegedly used rocket launchers and automatic weapons to damage the facility. The group claims that several military personnel were killed or injured during the confrontation, though these figures have not been independently verified.

In a separate move on April 14, the group blocked Nourozabad Road in Kharan for several hours. During this time, they searched passing vehicles and issued a stern warning to local transporters. The BLF cautioned that anyone providing logistical help or moving personnel for the military would be "directly targeted" in future operations.

This escalation follows a pattern of recent violence. In March, the group also claimed credit for destroying telecommunications towers, alleging the equipment was used for surveillance. They also reported a rocket attack on a Frontier Corps post in the Kech district. The BLF maintains that these armed actions will persist as they continue their push for regional independence. Local authorities remain on high alert as tensions in the province continue to rise.

Civilians return home as 10-day ceasefire begins

BEIRUT

A fragile 10-day ceasefire brokered by the United States officially began, sparking a massive wave of movement across Lebanon. Thousands of displaced civilians are currently clogging highways, heading back to southern Lebanon and the suburbs of Beirut to check on homes they haven't seen in weeks.

The truce comes after 46 days of intense conflict that has left cities like Nabatieh in ruins. Returning residents are being met with the sight of leveled neighborhoods, destroyed shops, and shattered infrastructure. While the return reflects a deep sense of resilience, many families say they are only visiting to assess the damage and are not yet ready to stay permanently.

Safety remains a major concern. The Lebanese Army has issued an urgent warning on social media, advising citizens to avoid border villages and stay away from "hazardous areas" during the night. Officials cited the presence of unexploded bombs and reports of sporadic agreement violations as ongoing risks to civilian life.

India and China map future of SCO

INDIA

Senior officials from India and China met in the capital this week to bridge the gap on regional cooperation. The two-day bilateral consultations, held April 16–17, focused on turning the high-level decisions made by the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) leaders into reality.

Ambassador Alok A. Dimri of India and Ambassador Yan Wenbin of China led their respective teams. The primary goal was to strengthen ties within the ten-member group, which now includes heavyweights like Russia, Iran, and Belarus. In a rare show of unity, both delegations met with India's Secretary (West), Sibi George, to review a wide range of shared interests.

The discussions moved beyond mere diplomacy, targeting four specific pillars for regional stability:

- **Security:** Tackling cross-border threats and regional safety.
- **Trade:** Streamlining economic exchanges between the member states.
- **Connectivity:** Building better transport links across Eurasia.
- **People-to-People Ties:** Enhancing cultural and educational exchanges.

This meeting comes at a symbolic time, as both nations recently marked 76 years of diplomatic relations. Chinese Ambassador Xu Feihong noted that it is the "right choice" for the neighbors to partner together, famously referencing the "Dragon-Elephant Tango."

With Kyrgyzstan now heading the SCO under the theme of "Sustainable Peace," India and China have pledged to keep talking. While disagreements often grab the headlines, this week in New Delhi was about finding the common ground necessary to lead the world's largest regional organization into its next quarter-century.

Europe offers to clear mines in Hormuz

PARIS

France has announced that European allies have the military strength to clear underwater mines from the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global energy and trade. French Defence Minister Catherine Vautrin confirmed that France, Belgium, and the Netherlands are prepared to deploy specialized vessels to secure the waterway and provide armed escorts for commercial ships. The announcement comes as British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron prepare to co-host a virtual summit with leaders from forty nations. The group aims to establish an international mission to reopen the strait, which has been hampered by tensions and naval blockades. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz is also expected to participate, signaling strong support from Berlin for mine-clearing and maritime surveillance. Prime Minister Starmer is expected to tell world leaders that reopening the strait is a "global responsibility" necessary for the free flow of commerce. While the proposed mission is described as strictly defensive, it follows claims by U.S. Central Command that American warships have already begun identifying minefields allegedly laid by regional forces.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

3	7		6		8	2	4	
2			7			8	6	
6	8			9				3
1	3			8	2	9		6
9	2		1	3				4
5		8	9	4		1	3	
	5	3	8	7		6		1
		2	3		1	4	5	
	1	6		2	5		9	

8	9	6	3	5	1	4	7	2
5	3	4	2	6	7	8	1	9
2	1	7	8	9	4	5	3	6
4	2	8	1	3	9	6	5	7
9	7	1	5	2	6	3	8	4
3	6	5	4	7	8	9	2	1
7	5	3	6	4	2	1	9	8
1	4	9	7	8	3	2	6	5
6	8	2	9	1	5	7	4	3

Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Fill a 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contain all of the digits between 1 and 9.

Iran warns stability requires respect for sovereign rights

TEHRAN

Iran's top diplomat at the United Nations has warned that lasting peace in the Strait of Hormuz is impossible without full respect for Iranian sovereignty. Ambassador Amir-Saeid Iravani issued the statement, following a massive U.S. naval blockade designed to pressure Tehran amid rising regional tensions. Speaking from New York, Iravani argued that maritime safety in the Persian Gulf depends entirely on honoring the legal rights of coastal states. He labeled the U.S. military actions "unlawful" and a "flagrant breach" of the UN Charter. According to the envoy, obstructing traffic to Iranian ports not only violates Iran's rights but also threatens international trade and the rights of third-party nations. The situation in the strategic waterway has reached a boiling point. U.S. Central Command confirmed that over 10,000 personnel, a dozen warships, and 100 aircraft are currently enforcing the blockade. While U.S. President Donald Trump praised the Navy's efficiency, stating that "no ship is even thinking about entering," military officials clarified the blockade specifically targets Iranian coastlines rather than closing the entire Strait.

CANCER CARE CRISIS

Budget shortfall halts free cancer care in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD

A critical funding crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has brought free cancer treatment to a standstill at three major medical institutions. Over 1,000 registered patients are currently stranded without life-saving medication as hospitals in Peshawar and Abbottabad exhaust their remaining stocks.

The situation stems from a significant gap in government funding. While the free treatment program requires PKR 1,500 million for the 2025-26 period, only PKR 820 million has been released so far, leaving a deficit of PKR 680 million.

"Stopping these medications is a death sentence for many," warn local oncologists. Because these specialized drugs are prohibitively expensive on the open market, poor patients have no alternative way to continue their treatment.

CURRENT HOSPITAL STATUS

INSTITUTION	PATIENT IMPACT	STOCK STATUS
Khyber Teaching Hospital (KTH)	623 patients waiting	Completely Out
Hayatabad Medical Complex (HMC)	Registered patients waiting	Critical shortage
Ayub Teaching Hospital (ATH)	347 patients treated since Aug	Nearly exhausted

Beyond cancer care, the general public is facing a massive surge in medicine costs at major hubs like Rawalpindi's Bohor Bazaar. Prices for essential life-saving drugs have jumped by 50% to 500%.

- Insulin devices: Increased from PKR 2,200 to PKR 4,720.
- Thyroid medicine: Spiked from PKR 85 to PKR 290.
- Common antibiotics: Prices have risen by roughly 15-20% across the board.

Health Secretary Shahidullah Khan stated he is negotiating with the Planning and Development Department to move existing funds around, but until the cash is released, the province's most vulnerable patients remain in limbo.

Squash world mourns passing of visionary leader

Former World Squash Federation chief Narayana Ramachandran has passed away at 77, leaving a major legacy in sports administration

NEW DELHI

The global sports community is in mourning following the death of Narayana Ramachandran, the former chief of the World Squash Federation. Known affectionately as "Rami," he passed away at the age of 77 after battling a long illness.

Ramachandran was a trailblazer for Indian sports administration. In 2008, he became the first Indian to lead a major international sports federation recognized by the Olympics. During his eight years as president, he worked tirelessly to get squash onto the world's biggest stages. He was even awarded the prestigious Olympic Order for his incredible dedication and personal service to the movement.

Closer to home, he served as the president of the Indian Olympic Association. He is credited with bringing stability to the organization during a very difficult period. Friends and colleagues remember him as a calm, principled leader who always did what was best for the athletes.

He is also the man responsible for making Chennai the "squash capital" of India by building world-class facilities and hosting ten world championships.

Current sports leaders praised his legacy, noting that his hard work ensured squash remains a key sport in major events like the Asian Games. From local courts to international boardrooms, Ramachandran's influence was felt everywhere. As the sports world says goodbye, his contributions to the growth of squash will surely be remembered for generations to come.

RCB stars launch bold new global fan campaign

BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) is taking its massive fan following to a whole new level. The defending IPL champions have launched the "#RCBEverywhere" movement, urging supporters to wear the iconic red and gold jersey in every part of their daily lives.

Leading the charge are cricket superstars Virat Kohli, Captain Rajat Patidar, and all-rounder Krunal Pandya. They are encouraging fans to sport the team colors beyond the cricket stadium, whether at the office, on vacation, or even at job interviews. "You've really made this a thing, and we love it," Kohli shared in a recent release, praising the loyalty of the RCB faithful.

The campaign has already gone global with the support of sprinting legend Usain Bolt. The world's fastest man posted a photo in the 2026 RCB jersey, wishing the team luck. Adding a touch of local heart to the movement is the "Kumbh Mela fan," who went viral last year for bringing his RCB shirt to the massive spiritual gathering to pray for the team's success.

The jersey has evolved from simple sportswear into a powerful symbol of identity. It has traveled from cultural festivals to personal milestones, proving that the bond between the team and its fans is unbreakable. Currently sitting second in the points table with four wins, RCB is preparing to face Delhi Capitals this Saturday. With the city behind them, the champions are ready to defend their title with style and pride.

Defending champions RCB launched the "#RCBEverywhere" movement, with stars like Virat Kohli and Usain Bolt urging fans to wear team jerseys in all aspects of life

Djokovic withdraws from Madrid due to shoulder injury

SPAIN

Tennis fans received disappointing news, as legendary Serbian star Novak Djokovic officially pulled out of the upcoming Mutua Madrid Open. Tournament organizers confirmed the withdrawal, citing a lingering injury that has kept the former world number one off the court for several weeks.

Djokovic has been struggling with a right shoulder injury since late March. The issue previously forced him to miss the Miami Open, and it appears he needs more time to recover before competing at the highest level again. A three-time champion in Madrid, Djokovic last won the title at the Caja Magica in 2019. In a brief message to his fans on social media, he expressed his sadness, stating he is working hard on his recovery to return to the tour as soon as possible.

The 2026 season has been a challenging one for the 38-year-old veteran. After a tough loss to Carlos Alcaraz in the Australian Open final in February, he suffered a surprising early exit at Indian Wells, losing a thrilling three-set match to Britain's Jack Draper. That match seems to have taken a physical toll, leading to his current hiatus from the ATP Masters 1000 circuit.

Despite this setback, there is still hope for his return during the clay-court season. Experts believe Djokovic is targeting the Italian Open in Rome, which begins on May 6. This would serve as his final tune-up before he attempts to add another Grand Slam title to his record-breaking collection later this summer.

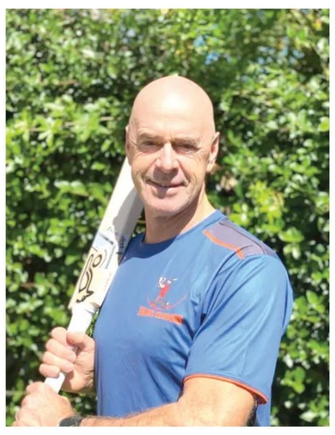
Sri Lanka women aim high with new coach

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka's women's cricket team set off for Bangladesh, with a fresh strategy and a powerful new mindset. Led by captain Chamari Athapaththu, the squad is focusing on "muscling" their batting performance under the guidance of their new head coach, Australian Jamie Siddons.

The upcoming series, featuring three ODIs and three T20Is, is a high-stakes mission for the visitors. Athapaththu emphasized that every match is vital for securing direct qualification for the next ODI World Cup. By winning in Bangladesh, the team hopes to avoid the stress and uncertainty of the qualifying playoffs. The skipper noted that the team has been training specifically on power-hitting to compete with the world's best.

"The arrival of Jamie Siddons is a huge step for us," Athapaththu said before departure. She expressed immense pride in how far women's cricket has grown in Sri Lanka, noting that young players are now stepping up as leaders. While the team will miss injured batter Vishmi Gunaratne, the captain remains confident in the talent of her replacement players and the experienced core of the squad.



The action begins in Rajshahi on April 20 for the one-day matches, followed by T20 battles in Sylhet. With the support of Sri Lanka Cricket and a revamped coaching staff, the team is determined to prove they belong on the global stage. This tour isn't just about winning games; it's about establishing Sri Lanka as a dominant force in women's cricket.

New pair joins India's Uber cup squad

NEW DELHI

India's women's badminton team has faced a sudden change just days before the 2026 Uber Cup Finals. Star doubles player Treesa Jolly has been ruled out due to injury, forcing a late shuffle in the national lineup. Her partner, Gayatri Gopichand, will also miss the event, leaving a gap in India's defense.

To fill the void, the Badminton Association of India (BAI) has called up Shruti Mishra and Priya Konjengbam. The young duo will join teammates like Tanisha Crasto to lead the doubles challenge. While the injury is a setback, the team remains hopeful. In the singles category, world-renowned star PV Sindhu will lead a group of talented young players, including rising star Unnati Hooda.

Meanwhile, the men's team is heading into the Thomas Cup with high confidence. Led by Lakshya Sen and the world-class doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, the men's squad looks stronger than ever. Veterans like Kidambi Srikanth and HS Prannoy are also ready to bring their experience to the court in Denmark.

The prestigious tournament is set to begin on April 24 in Horsens, Denmark. Despite the last-minute changes to the women's team, the Indian contingent is determined to make its mark on the global stage. This year's event is a major test for India's depth in badminton, blending legendary champions with the next generation of hungry young athletes ready to fight for gold.

Legal battle erupts over Messi missing Miami match

MIAMI

Soccer superstar Lionel Messi is facing a legal firestorm after a Florida-based promoter filed a lawsuit claiming the icon skipped a scheduled exhibition match under false pretenses. The legal action, filed by VID Music Group, alleges that Messi and the Argentine Football Association (AFA) breached a contract that was built entirely around the star's participation.

According to the court documents, the agreement for last October's friendly matches required Messi to play at least 30 minutes per game. The promoter argues that Messi's presence was the "primary economic driver" for the event. However, fans were left disappointed when the 38-year-old watched Argentina's 1-0 victory over Venezuela from a luxury suite at Hard Rock Stadium instead of taking the field.

The controversy deepened the very next day when Messi suited up for his club team, Inter Miami, scoring twice in a 4-0 win against Atlanta United. The lawsuit suggests this quick turnaround proves he was fit to play, accusing the star and the AFA of "negligent misrepresentation."

While Messi did participate in a later match against Puerto Rico, the promoter claims the damage was already done. The lawsuit also names sports executive Julian Marcos Kapelan, alleging a conspiracy to lure the company into expensive contracts under "false pretenses." As the 2026 World Cup approaches, this legal drama adds a layer of tension to Messi's historic career in the United States. Neither Messi's representatives nor the AFA have released an official statement regarding the active litigation.

Aussie teen Gout Gout chases sprint history

BRISBANE

Australia's newest track sensation, 18-year-old Gout Gout, is ready to shake up the world of sprinting once again. Just days after smashing the under-20 world record in the 200-meter dash, the teenage star has set his sights on a new milestone: breaking the legendary 10-second barrier in the 100-meter sprint.

Competing at the Australian junior championships in Brisbane, Gout eased through his heats with a solid time of 10.19 seconds. However, he knows he can go faster. Back in February, he clocked a personal best of exactly 10.00 seconds on this very same track. On Saturday, he hopes to join an elite club of only two other Australians who have ever dipped into the nine-second range.

"Anything is possible," a confident Gout told reporters, noting that calm winds could help him make history.

While current national record holder Patrick Johnson encourages the young star to "create his own reality," others are more skeptical. American sprint legend Justin Gatlin recently suggested that Gout needs to prove his speed outside the "comfort" of Australian tracks.

Gout, unfazed by the criticism, views the doubt as fuel. "If there are haters, it means you are doing something right," he said with a smile. For the young man often compared to a teenage Usain Bolt, the goal is simple: ignore the noise and keep running faster. All eyes now turn to the Brisbane finish line to see if a new era of Australian track has truly arrived.

Nail biting semi-finals at Delhi golf club

NEW DELHI

The historic Delhi Golf Club witnessed a day of high-stakes drama as Sara X Golf Code and Baale Golf fought their way into the finals of the fifth Members League. In a series of nail-biting matches, both teams showcased nerves of steel to overcome their rivals and set up a highly anticipated title clash.

The highlight of the day was a thrilling playoff between Sara X Golf Code and Athletic Drive. After both teams finished their regular games tied at 7 points, the match went to a tie-breaker. Pratap Singh Atwal became the hero for Sara X, hitting a massive drive that set up a perfect birdie. His teammate, Simar Inder Singh, provided solid support by finishing with a par, safely guiding their team into the championship round.

Athletic Drive had fought back valiantly from being down early in the day, winning the final two games of the main set to force that playoff. However, a bit of bad luck in the thick grass during the tie-breaker ultimately cost them the win.

In the second semi-final, Baale Golf proved too strong for the SwingKKings. Although SwingKKings took an early lead by winning the first game, Baale Golf stormed back to win the next three.

Uttar Pradesh hockey leads India's future growth

NEW DELHI

Uttar Pradesh is solidifying its position as the beating heart of Indian hockey. The state's Sub Junior Men's team recently struck gold at the National Championship in Bihar, marking a major milestone in a remarkable "grassroots to glory" journey. Over the last 16 years, the state has racked up an impressive 21 medals across various national categories.

The secret to this success lies deep within the state's organized scouting system. By finding young talent in small districts and training them in high-performance academies, Uttar Pradesh has seen a massive surge in victories. In fact, 15 of those 21 medals were won just since 2021. This rapid growth is supported by world-class infrastructure, with over 15 new blue astro-turf pitches built in cities like Lucknow, Varanasi, and Jhansi.

This system isn't just winning local trophies, it is fueling the national team. Stars like Olympic bronze medalist Lalit Upadhyay and rising talent Mumtaz Khan all started in this grassroots program. The state is proudly carrying forward the legacy of legends like Major Dhyan Chand, ensuring that the next generation has the tools to succeed.

R.P. Singh, President of Uttar Pradesh Hockey, credited the tireless work of local coaches and modern facilities for this rise. With plans to build even more pitches across the region, the state aims to send even more players to represent India on the global stage. For Uttar Pradesh, this golden era is just the beginning of a long-term dominance in the sport.

QUICK READ

Govt selects 10 AI startups for global expansion

New Delhi

The India AI Mission has selected 10 Indian AI startups for its second global acceleration programme aimed at helping them expand into international markets and strengthen India's AI ecosystem. The programme is run in partnership with Station F in Paris and HEC Paris and provides mentorship, resources, and global networking opportunities. It aligns with India's National AI Strategy focused on innovation and cross-border collaboration. The selected startups include Awiros, Cognecto, Infiheal Healthtech, Sky Serve (Hyspace Technologies) and others. They will undergo a three-week online phase followed by a three-month residency in Paris. The initiative is part of broader government efforts to boost AI and semiconductor development in India.

Women-led businesses need stronger policy support

New Delhi

A report by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) has called for stronger regulatory reforms to support women-led enterprises in India. It recommends expanding the 3% reservation under the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) for women entrepreneurs and simplifying licensing and compliance processes to improve participation in public procurement. The report notes that women entrepreneurs continue to face structural barriers such as limited access to credit, markets, and government contracts, which restrict business growth. It argues that targeted reforms, easier regulatory frameworks, and improved procurement access are essential to boost women's participation in formal economic systems and promote inclusive growth across sectors.

Vedanta to borrow $125 mn, limits Zinc stake dilution

Mumbai

Vedanta Limited secured a $125 million external commercial borrowing deal with conditions restricting stake dilution in Hindustan Zinc Limited. The agreement requires the company to maintain at least 50.1 per cent ownership and retain control until repayment. It was signed with JPMorgan Chase Bank N.A. through its GIFT City branch in Mumbai via Axis Trustee Services as agent. Vedanta also cannot sell or pledge its stake until full repayment. The company already holds 60.71 per cent in Hindustan Zinc. Despite heavy pledging of existing loans and market volatility, shares traded slightly lower while broader indices rose. Stock gained 29% year-to-date.

Markets close higher on broad-based rally led by FMCG

Indian equities ended higher with strong FMCG buying while Nifty and Sensex posted solid gains across sectors overall.

MUMBAI

Indian equity markets ended the session on a strong note on Friday, supported by broad-based buying across sectors, with FMCG stocks leading the gains. The upbeat momentum helped benchmark indices recover and close higher despite intermittent volatility during the trading day.

The Nifty index gained 156 points, while the Sensex advanced 504 points, reflecting sustained investor optimism and steady participation from both institutional and retail investors. Market breadth remained positive, with more stocks advancing than declining across major indices.

FMCG emerged as the top-performing sector, rising 2.65 per cent, driven by renewed demand expectations and strong buying interest in heavyweight consumer stocks. Analysts noted that defensive sectors such as FMCG often attract inflows during uncertain global conditions, contributing to their outperformance.

Other sectors also contributed to the rally, with selective buying seen in banking, auto, and consumer discretionary stocks. However, gains were uneven as some IT and energy stocks remained under pressure due to global cues and profit booking.

Market participants attributed the positive close to improving global sentiment, stable crude oil prices, and continued foreign institutional inflows. FIIs have been net buyers in recent sessions, adding further support to domestic equities.

Sentiment was also boosted by expectations of steady domestic economic growth and resilient corporate earnings outlook for the coming quarters. Traders said that easing geopolitical concerns and stability in currency markets also helped improve risk appetite.

Overall, the session reflected renewed confidence in Indian equities, with strong sectoral rotation and sustained institutional participation helping benchmarks end firmly in the green. Analysts, however, cautioned that volatility may persist due to global macroeconomic uncertainties and geopolitical developments.

India's current account deficit may widen to 2% by FY27

NEW DELHI

Crisil expects India's current account deficit to widen to 2% of GDP by FY27, driven by higher imports despite stable oil price assumptions.

Crisil expects India's current account deficit (CAD) to rise to around 2 per cent of GDP by March 2027 even if crude oil prices remain in the USD 82–87 per barrel range, driven by higher import bills and persistent external uncertainties.

According to the report, the CAD is likely to expand from lower levels in FY26 to about 1.5 per cent of GDP in FY27 under a baseline scenario, but could touch 2 per cent in an adverse or higher-cost oil environment. The key driver remains India's heavy dependence on imported crude oil, which makes the external balance sensitive to global energy price movements.

Crisil noted that geopolitical risks, especially ongoing tensions in West Asia, continue to pose uncertainty for global crude prices and shipping routes. Any sustained disruption could push import costs higher and widen the trade deficit further.

However, the report also highlighted a cushioning effect from India's strong services exports, particularly IT and business services, along with steady remittance inflows. These help offset part of the merchandise trade gap and prevent sharper deterioration in the current account balance.

On the financing side, India is expected to rely on stable foreign portfolio inflows and foreign direct investment, though these flows remain sensitive to global interest rate trends and risk sentiment.

Economists say a CAD of around 2 per cent of GDP is still manageable by historical standards, but it could increase pressure on the rupee and require closer monitoring of external sector stability if combined with sustained high oil prices or weaker capital inflows.

Overall, the outlook suggests a gradual widening of India's external deficit, shaped mainly by energy prices, global trade conditions, and geopolitical risks.

PNGRB plans $12,500 cr LPG pipeline expansion drive

NEW DELHI

India's downstream regulator, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), is preparing a major expansion of the country's LPG pipeline network that is expected to attract investments of around ₹12,500 cr, according to a recent report.

The proposed plan focuses on significantly strengthening LPG transportation infrastructure by shifting more fuel movement from road and rail to pipelines. This is aimed at improving efficiency, reducing logistics costs, and ensuring a more reliable supply of cooking gas across the country.

A key component of the expansion involves developing multiple new LPG pipeline projects that will connect additional bottling plants and consumption centres. Earlier assessments by PNGRB identified several pipeline routes to enhance nationwide connectivity and reduce dependence on tanker-based transport.

The initiative is also expected to attract strong participation from both public and private sector players, given the scale of investment and long-term demand for cleaner fuels. By enabling pipeline-based LPG distribution, the plan seeks to lower transportation losses, improve safety, and reduce carbon emissions compared to conventional logistics methods.

Another important objective is to support India's broader energy transition strategy. Expanding pipeline infrastructure will complement the growth of city gas distribution (CGD) networks and help ensure uninterrupted fuel availability, especially in underserved and remote regions.

Crisil expects Indian banks' gross NPAs to remain stable despite global risks, supported by strong fundamentals and credit growth.

Banks gross NPAs seen range-bound till 2027 report

NEW DELHI

Crisil expects gross non-performing assets (GNPA) of Indian banks to remain range-bound at 2.0–2.2 per cent by March 2027, even as geopolitical uncertainties in West Asia create external risks, according to its latest outlook.

According to Crisil, the banking sector's asset quality is expected to remain stable, supported by controlled slippages, steady credit growth, and healthy balance sheets across both public and private sector lenders.

The report noted that improvements in corporate leverage and strong retail loan performance have helped keep fresh stress additions under control, reducing pressure on overall bank balance sheets.

Crisil added that even though global risks such as elevated oil prices and geopolitical tensions in West Asia may create temporary volatility, Indian banks are well-positioned to absorb such shocks due to strong capital buffers.

It also highlighted that credit growth is likely to remain steady over the medium term, supported by domestic demand and ongoing investment activity across key sectors of the economy.

Overall, the report suggests that Indian banks will continue to benefit from a resilient macroeconomic environment, improving credit discipline, and ongoing resolution of legacy stressed assets, which together are expected to keep the GNPA ratio within a narrow range over the forecast period.

Analysts said that while external shocks such as geopolitical tensions and commodity price fluctuations remain a watch factor, the domestic banking system's capital adequacy and provisioning buffers provide sufficient cushion against potential deterioration in asset quality.

Credit metrics are expected to remain stable as recovery trends continue and systemic risks stay contained in the medium term outlook according Crisil estimates.

India seen as stable global capital hub with strong market growth

NEW DELHI

India is increasingly being viewed as a stable and attractive global capital hub, backed by a market capitalisation of around USD 4.4 trillion and strong macroeconomic fundamentals, according to Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey.

Speaking at an interaction with global investors in San Francisco, Pandey highlighted that India's capital markets have demonstrated resilience despite global volatility and continue to offer long-term stability. He emphasized that the country remains "open and welcoming to global capital," supported by a transparent, consultative, and technology-driven regulatory framework.

Pandey noted that India's strength lies in a combination of controlled inflation, robust foreign exchange reserves, and stable external accounts, all of which enhance investor confidence. He also pointed to a growing base of domestic investors, which has added depth and stability to the markets, reducing dependence on foreign flows.

Highlighting reforms, the SEBI chief said efforts have been made to simplify Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) registration and compliance processes, along with expanding digital systems for onboarding and monitoring. These measures are aimed at improving ease of doing business and making Indian markets more accessible to global investors.

India's capital markets have also seen steady growth in initial public offerings (IPOs) and alternative investment funds, reflecting increasing participation and maturity. Policymakers believe such developments, along with continued regulatory improvements, are helping position India as a reliable destination for long-term global investments.

Additionally, stronger India–US economic ties and engagement with global venture capital ecosystems are expected to further boost capital inflows. With its large and growing economy, reform-oriented policies, and expanding financial markets, India is positioning itself as one of the most stable and scalable investment destinations globally.

Rupee strengthens amid easing tensions and equity inflows

MUMBAI

The Indian rupee appreciated by 28 paise to 92.86 against the US dollar in early trading on Friday, supported by improved global sentiment and gains in domestic equity markets. The currency opened at 92.93 in the interbank foreign exchange market and strengthened further during initial deals, extending its upward movement from the previous session. The rupee had already gained 19 paise to settle at 93.14 against the dollar.

Market participants attributed the rupee's rise to a combination of factors, including expectations of easing geopolitical tensions and renewed foreign investor interest in Indian equities. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) turned net buyers in the previous session, purchasing equities worth Rs 382.36 crore, which provided additional support to the domestic currency.

However, forex traders noted that despite the gains, the rupee continues to face pressure from a relatively strong US dollar. The dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of six major currencies, edged up 0.05 per cent to 98.07, limiting sharper appreciation in the rupee.

Global crude oil prices also played a role in currency movement. Brent crude declined 1.16 per cent to USD 98.24 per barrel, falling below the USD 100 mark amid hopes of de-escalation in West Asia tensions. Recent developments, including diplomatic efforts involving major countries and a temporary ceasefire agreement in the region, have contributed to improved market confidence.

Meanwhile, Indian equity benchmarks opened higher, with the Sensex rising 176.08 points and the Nifty gaining 33.90 points, reflecting positive investor sentiment.

India construction sector to reach $1.2 trillion by 2034

NEW DELHI

India's construction market is projected to expand significantly, reaching $1.2 trillion by 2034 from $685 billion in 2025, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.9 per cent, according to a report by Savills India and Hotelivate. The growth is being driven by strong infrastructure investments and rapid urban development across the country.

The report highlights sustained demand for office spaces, particularly from Global Capability Centres (GCCs), along with a clear shift toward Grade-A and sustainable workspaces, which is supporting the commercial real estate segment. However, rising input costs continue to put pressure on overall project economics.

Construction costs have risen by 6.4–7.6 per cent, largely due to higher mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) expenses. Between 2023 and 2025, cost inflation ranged from 3.8 per cent to 13.9 per cent across sectors, with retail and residential segments witnessing the sharpest increases. Malls saw the highest escalation due to complex designs and rising MEP costs.

Residential demand remains strong, especially for premium housing, while labour wages have risen about 23 per cent since 2020. Meanwhile, the hospitality sector is recovering steadily, with occupancy at 67–68 per cent and average room rates exceeding ₹9,000, supported by a robust investment pipeline.

GOLD PRICES RISE

Gold gains 10% amid global uncertainty outlook steady

MUMBAI

Gold prices have risen nearly 10 per cent in 2026 amid global economic uncertainty, with analysts maintaining a constructive medium- to long-term outlook, according to a report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd (MOFSL). The metal has shown volatile movement through the year, driven by shifting global cues and investor sentiment.

The report noted that geopolitical tensions, concerns over slowing global growth, and uncertainty around US interest rate policy have supported gold's safe-haven appeal. At the same time, intermittent strength in the US dollar and elevated bond yields have created periodic pressure, resulting in uneven price trends.

On the demand side, India has seen subdued jewellery purchases due to elevated prices, making consumers highly price-sensitive. This has also led to discounts in the domestic market. In contrast, China has witnessed relatively stronger investment-led demand, supporting global consumption trends.

The report highlighted a growing shift in India towards financial gold products such as exchange-traded funds (ETFs), indicating changing investor behaviour. Central banks also continued significant buying, purchasing up to 870 tonnes in 2025, though at a slower pace than earlier years.

Global ETF inflows have shown signs of recovery, suggesting renewed investor interest after previous outflows. Analysts believe this diversified demand base is helping support gold prices despite near-term volatility.

Looking ahead, gold is expected to trade in a broad range as markets adjust to evolving macroeconomic conditions. While short-term consolidation is possible, the medium- to long-term outlook remains positive, supported by inflation concerns, currency risks, and geopolitical uncertainty.

Experts maintain a "buy on dips" approach for long-term investors, noting that gold continues to act as a reliable hedge against inflation and global financial instability.

Gujarat Titans defeated Kolkata Knight Riders by 5 wickets at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on Friday.

RCB GOES GREEN TO PROTECT THE PLANET

BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) is trading its signature red for a vibrant green. When the team steps onto the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium turf to face the Delhi Capitals, they won't just be playing for play-off points; they will be playing for the environment.

This annual "Green Initiative," which started back in 2011, features special jerseys made entirely from recycled materials. Beyond the fashion choice, the move highlights RCB's status as the world's only carbon-neutral T20 cricket franchise. It is a promise to the city and the planet to keep the game sustainable.

The team's efforts go far beyond the field. On match days, the franchise conducts surveys to understand how fans travel to the stadium, encouraging them to ditch private cars for the Bengaluru Metro. In fact, an RCB match ticket doubles as a metro pass, making it easier for supporters to reduce their carbon footprint. Inside the stadium, every piece of waste is carefully audited, and solar power helps light up the stands.

CEO Rajesh Menon noted that this achievement is the result of years of hard work, aiming to inspire fans to adopt greener habits in their own lives. Currently sitting strong in the standings with four wins from five matches, the team is in high spirits. As they chase another victory on April 18, the "Men in Green" hope to prove that winning on the scoreboard and winning for the earth can go hand in hand.

Coach praises stars after Punjab's big victory

MUMBAI

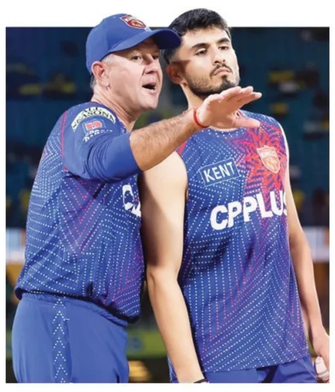
Punjab Kings' bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule has praised the heroics of Arshdeep Singh and Prabhsimran Singh following the team's convincing seven wicket win over Mumbai Indians. The victory was a total team effort, but the two young stars stood out for their match bwinning performances under the lights at Wankhede Stadium.

Arshdeep Singh, who had struggled with his form in earlier matches, silenced his critics by taking 3 wickets for just 22 runs. His victims included big names like Suryakumar Yadav, helping to keep Mumbai's total reachable despite a century from Quinton de Kock. Bahutule noted that Arshdeep went "back to basics" recently, focusing on intense target practice. This hard work paid off as he delivered perfectly with both the new and old ball.

On the batting side, Prabhsimran Singh made the difficult chase look simple. He smashed an unbeaten 80 runs from only 39 balls, leading Punjab to victory in just 16.3 overs. Bahutule credited head coach Ricky Ponting for this success, stating that Ponting's positive energy has transformed the mindset of the batters. Prabhsimran, in particular, has flourished under this new aggressive approach.

With this win, Punjab Kings have climbed to the top of the league table. While Mumbai Indians are left searching for answers, Punjab is riding high on confidence. Bahutule emphasized that the combination of Arshdeep's disciplined bowling and Prabhsimran's fearless batting is exactly what the team needs to stay at the top this season.

Ricky Ponting shares secret to Punjab's success



MUMBAI

Punjab Kings head coach Ricky Ponting has revealed the strategy behind his team's unbeaten run in IPL 2026. Following a dominant seven wicket victory over the Mumbai Indians, the legendary Australian cricketer explained that building a winning mindset starts with a supportive environment rather than strict control.

Ponting believes his main job is to challenge players while making sure they feel valued. He emphasized that in the fast paced world of T20 cricket, failure is common, and players must feel safe enough to take risks. According to the coach, the team's success is built on giving every player a clear role. He noted that when athletes like Prabhsimran Singh and Shashank Singh feel fully backed by the management, they respond with match-winning performances.

The strategy is clearly working. Punjab is currently the only undefeated team in the tournament, sitting at the top of the points table with four wins and one rain affected draw. In their latest match, they made a difficult chase look easy, reaching Mumbai's target in just 16.3 overs.

Even a brilliant century from Mumbai's Quinton de Kock was not enough to stop the Punjab momentum. While Mumbai Indians have slipped to ninth place, Ponting's squad is thriving on a culture of confidence and clarity. By selecting the right people during the auction and focusing on a positive team culture, Ponting has transformed Punjab into the most feared side of the season so far.

TENDULKAR STUNNED BY IYER'S BOUNDARY BRILLIANCE

MUMBAI

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar called Shreyas Iyer's relay catch to dismiss Hardik Pandya one of the best he has ever seen live. The stunning moment came during the IPL clash between Punjab Kings and Mumbai Indians at Wankhede Stadium.

In the 18th over, Pandya smashed a powerful shot toward long-on. Iyer sprinted, leaped near the boundary, and, while airborne, flicked the ball back into play to avoid crossing the rope. Teammate Xavier Bartlett completed the catch calmly.

Tendulkar praised Iyer's sharp awareness, saying the effort required precise judgment of speed, balance, and teammate positioning in seconds. The wicket proved decisive as Punjab chased 196 in just 16.3 overs to win by seven wickets, despite Quinton de Kock's unbeaten 112, pushing PBKS to the top. The remarkable fielding effort quickly went viral, drawing praise from fans, former players, and commentators across the cricketing world.

Lalit Modi cites political interference in the Pakistan Cricket Board as the main reason for stalled India-Pakistan bilateral series

Politics keeps India and Pakistan cricket apart

LONDON

Cricket fans hoping for a match between India and Pakistan may have to wait much longer. Former IPL boss Lalit Modi recently shared his thoughts on why these two rivals do not play each other in regular series anymore.

Speaking on a popular podcast with cricket star Michael Vaughan, Modi pointed to one major issue that the way the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is run. He claims the board is far too involved in politics. According to Modi, the PCB is not independent, and powerful leaders are "pulling the levers" behind the scenes. This political interference makes it very hard for the two countries to agree on playing together.

Modi explained that because of the deep tension between the two nations, things might actually get worse before they get better. He expressed worry for the players, noting that both Indians and Pakistanis are very patriotic. This strong national pride, combined with political heat, makes hosting a series almost impossible right now.

The history of these games shows a long gap. The last time Pakistan visited India for a full series was back in 2013. Since then, the teams only meet during major global tournaments like the World Cup or the Asia Cup. Their most recent clash happened during the 2026 T20 World Cup, where India won by 61 runs. For now, it seems fans will have to stick to these rare tournament meetings, as a regular series remains a distant dream due to these ongoing political hurdles.

Lalit Modi wants IPL teams in tests

LONDON

Former IPL chairman Lalit Modi has sparked a massive debate by suggesting that IPL franchises should own Test teams to save the longest format of the game. Speaking on a podcast with Michael Vaughan, Modi warned that Test cricket is "dying" globally and needs a radical makeover to survive.

Modi believes the current generation lacks the patience for traditional five-day matches. His bold plan involves allowing popular T20 clubs to form their own Test sides. These teams would play exhibition matches to build loyalty among younger fans who are already attached to IPL brands. While he insisted that international matches between countries must remain the top priority, he argued that "club-level" Test cricket could provide the financial boost the format desperately needs.

Beyond ownership, Modi suggested shortening the game itself. He has long advocated for turning five-day matches into four-day, day-night events. He argued that modern audiences no longer have the luxury of sitting in the sun for five days straight. In a world with endless media options, he believes the game must adapt to stay relevant.

Currently, Modi sees strong interest in Test cricket only in England and Australia, largely thanks to the historic Ashes series. In most other nations, he claims the format is fading away. By introducing lights, shorter schedules, and the power of IPL branding, Modi hopes to catch the interest of young fans and ensure that the traditional form of cricket does not disappear forever.

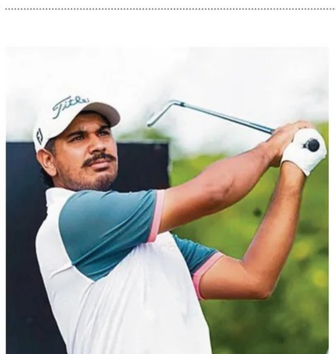
New teams join major global hockey tournament

SWITZERLAND

Exciting changes are coming to the world of international field hockey. For the first time ever, the Uruguay women's team and the USA men's team will compete in the prestigious FIH Hockey Nations Cup. This historic debut follows the unexpected withdrawal of the Scotland women's and Wales men's squads from the competition.

The women's tournament is set to ignite in Auckland, New Zealand, this June. The lineup is stacked with talent, featuring heavy hitters like Japan, Korea, and Chile. India also joins the fray after moving down from the Pro League, making this one of the most competitive fields in the tournament's history. For Uruguay, this is a golden opportunity to prove they belong among the world's elite.

Meanwhile, the men will head to the sunny shores of Cape Town, South Africa. The American men will face a grueling test against powerhouse teams like New Zealand, France, and the host nation. Since the Nations Cup began in 2021, it has served as a vital bridge for rising teams. The ultimate prize is massive, the winner of this tournament earns a direct promotion to the FIH Hockey Pro League next season.



Mane hits ace to dominate in Johannesburg

JOHANNESBURG

Indian Olympian Udayan Mane has taken complete control of the IGPL South Africa tournament with a stunning performance at the Royal Johannesburg's West Course. Mane followed his opening round of 65 with a brilliant 8-under-par 64, leaving him at 15-under total and six shots ahead of his nearest rivals.

The highlight of Mane's flawless second round was a hole-in-one on the par-3 fifth hole. He started his day just as strongly, sinking an eagle on the very first hole. By the time he reached the turn, he was already 5-under for the day. Adding three more birdies on the back nine, Mane completed 36 holes without a single bogey, making him the only player in the field to reach double digits under par.

Chasing Mane is a group of three players tied for second at 9-under, Manav Shah, Pukhraj Singh Gill, and Gaganjeet Bhullar. While they remain within striking distance, they face a steep climb to catch Mane, whose short game has looked incredibly sharp this week. Bhullar, a three-time IGPL winner, noted that while the course allows for low scores, catching Mane will require a nearly perfect final round.

In the team standings, Green Fuels Hyderabad holds a commanding 10-shot lead at 18-under, thanks to consistent play from Manav Shah and Danish Verma.

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